# MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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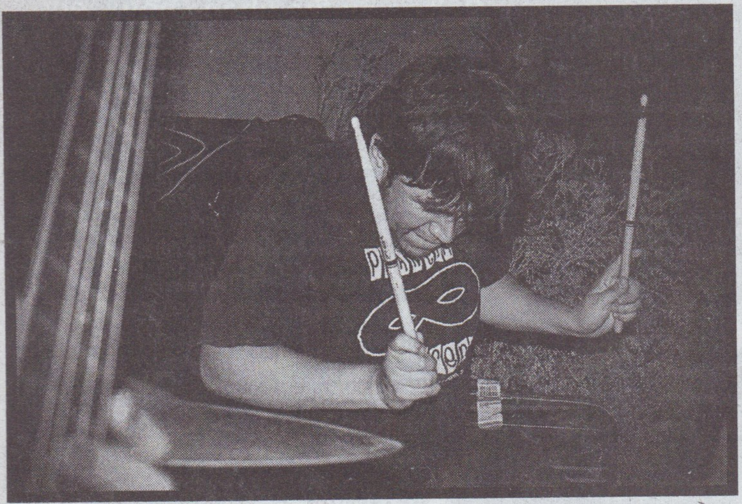

RIÑA | DAUÐYFLIN | LIFE FUCKER
FED UP FEST | *EXOTIC* DOCUMENTARY
HIRO THE AGGRESSION, FROM DISCLOSE
REPTILIANS FROM ANDROMEDA | LOS FASTIDIOS
XYLITOL | Y PANTS | WAYNEZ WORLD III
BOOK YOUR OWN FEST | IN FLUX | MYDOLLS

KAWAKAMI FOREVER

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Send records, demos, zines, and letters to PO Box 460760 San Francisco, CA 94146-0760

Send interviews, articles, scene reports, photos, and ads to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com.

Call us on the phone between 10AM and 10PM PST at (415) 923-9814.

More information at our website: maximumrocknroll.com

# TOP TENS

Some of our contributors' top ten (or so) things we've reviewed this month. For review consideration, send two copies of vinyl, or one copy of CD-only or demo releases to our PO Box. We review independent punk, garage, and hardcore releases—no major labels!

### GRACE AMBROSE

RIÑA – EP
MORDECAI – What is Art EP
GARY WRONG GROUP – 2xLP
LIFE STINKS – 45
86 GEMINI – My Love EP
BEATNIKS – Beatnik Theme EP
ROHT – Strákarnir Okkar EP
XYLITOL – It'll Slip EP
PURA MANÍA – Cerebros Punk LP
KALEIDOSCOPE – Volume 3 LP

### MATT BADENHOP

RIÑA – EP
RASHOMON – CS
PERIOD BOMB – CS
PERMANENTLY WET – CS
CHEETAH CHROME MOTHEFUCKERS – 2xCD
V/A – Pajtás Daloljunk X: Magyar Punk 1982-1986 LP
XYLITOL – It'll Slip EP
C.H.E.W. – Neuroleptics EP
RIXE – Baptême Du Feu EP

### ARIELLE BURGDORF

DEATHCHARGE – live
EXIT ORDER – Seed of Hysteria LP
RASHOMON – CS
RIÑA – EP
C.H.E.W. – Neuroleptics EP
PADOT NA VIZANTIJA – LP+CD
PURA MANÍA – Cerebros Punk LP
EXOTICA – Musique Exotique #01 EP
ATTENTAT – Ge Fan I Mej EP
DAGGER MOON – Citadel LP

### MITCH CARDWELL

MOZART – Nasty EP
LIFE STINKS – 45
GARY WRONG GROUP – 2xLP
MARBLED EYE – EPII EP
PURA MANÍA – Cerebros Punk LP
MORDECAI – What is Art EP
RIXE – Baptême Du Feu EP
BEATNIKS – Beatnik Theme EP
KALEIDOSCOPE –Volume 3 LP
DIE GROUP – live

### ROBERT COLLINS

CUNTROACHES – CS
PISSCHRIST – live
PRESSING ON – Future EP
TOZCOS – live
LOS CAIDOS – Tumbas flexi
ROUND EYE – Monster Vision CD
TECHIE BLOOD – live
PURA MANÍA – Cerebros Punk LP
REIZ – CS / RIÑA – EP
STRUL – Lennart Och Asen LP
MASS ARREST – live

### LAYLA GIBBON

MOZART – Nasty EP
MORDECAI – What is Art EP
RIÑA – EP
BEATNIKS – Beatnik Theme EP
GARY WRONG GROUP – 2xLP
LIFE STINKS – 45"
COLD SWEAT – Blinded LP
MARBLED EYE – EPII EP
EXOTICA – Musique Exotique #01 EP
V/A – Hamburger Saignant LP

### DAN GOETZ

MOZART – Nasty EP
S.H.I.T. – I EP
EXIT ORDER – Seed of Hysteria LP
COLD SWEAT – Blinded LP
RIÑA – EP
MACHO BOYS – LP
COKE BUST / DESPISE YOU – split EP
C.H.E.W. – Neuroleptics EP
RAT CAGE – Caged Like Rats EP
RATA NEGRA – Oído Absoluto LP

## GREG HARVESTER

- NATURE BOYS – 3rd LP
- DAUÐYFLIN – Ofbeldi LP
- PURA MANÍA – Cerebros Punk LP
- ROHT – Strákarnir Okkar EP
- RIÑA – EP
- FUTURE VIRGINS – LP
- RATA NEGRA – Oído Absoluto LP
- KALEIDOSCOPE –Volume 3 LP
- XYLITOL – It'll Slip EP
- MACHO BOYS – LP

## KENNY KAOS

- EROTIC DEVICES – LP
- EASY MONEY – LP
- TIGER TANK – B-List Singer LP
- FUTURE VIRGINS – LP
- NAG – "False Anxiety / imsosmall"
- BEATNIKS – Beatnik Theme EP
- LIFE STINKS – 45
- BAD SLEEP – Subtracting EP
- MUNJITAS DEL FUZZ – Es El 69 EP
- ATTENTAT – Ge Fan I Mej EP

## CAROLYN KEDDY

- MOZART – Nasty EP
- MANATEEES – 45
- BEATNIKS – Beatnik Theme EP
- MOMMY LONG LEGS – EP
- SCHIZOS – Fuck Iggy Pop EP
- RATA NEGRA – Oído Absoluto LP
- MORDECAI – What is Art EP
- NAG – "False Anxiety / imsosmall"
- GARY WRONG GROUP – 2xLP
- LIFE STINKS – 45
- STRAIGHTJACKET NATION – 12

## RAY LUJAN

- ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE – CD
- *ASK – Discipline & Pressure LP
- BAD SLEEP – Subtracting EP
- EASTFIELD – CD
- EASY MONEY – LP
- MARBLED EYE – EPII EP
- TIGER TANK – B-List Singer LP
- XETAS – The Tower LP
- ALICE BAG / BEACH SLANG – live
- BLEACHED – live
- TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET – live

## MARISSA MAGIC

- MOZART – Nasty EP release party
- S.H.I.T. – I EP
- GARY WRONG GROUP – 2xLP
- ROHT – Strákarnir Okkar EP
- KALEIDOSCOPE – Volume 3 LP
- 86 GEMINI – My Love EP
- BEATNIKS – Beatnik Theme EP
- MORDECAI – What is Art EP
- MARBLED EYE – EPII EP
- NATURE BOYS – 3rd LP

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- RIXE – Baptême Du Feu EP
- RAT CAGE – Caged Like Rats EP
- RIÑA – EP
- EXIT ORDER – Seed of Hysteria LP
- PMS 84 – Easy Way Out LP
- RATA NEGRA – Oído Absoluto LP
- BEATNIKS – Beatnik Theme EP
- MOZART – Nasty EP
- BETA BOYS – EP
- SYNDROME 81 / URBAN SAVAGE – split EP

## FRED SCHRUNK

- MACHO BOYS – LP
- EXIT ORDER – Seed of Hysteria LP
- RATA NEGRA – Oído Absoluto LP
- EXOTICA – Musique Exotique #01 EP
- MOZART – Nasty EP
- BETA BOYS – EP
- XYLITOL – It'll Slip EP
- RIXE – Baptême Du Feu EP
- MARBLED EYE – EPII EP
- RIÑA – EP
- C.H.E.W. – Neuroleptics EP

## LENA TAHMASSIAN

- MARBLED EYE – EPII EP
- NATURE BOYS – 3rd LP
- RATA NEGRA – Oído Absoluto LP
- V/A – Pajtás Daloljunk X: Magyar Punk 1982-1986 LP
- EXOTICA – Musique Exotique #01 EP
- SYNDROME 81 / URBAN SAVAGE – split EP
- RIÑA – EP
- EASY MONEY – LP
- GARY WRONG GROUP – 2xLP


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# ISSUE #410

Lowest Priority at Book Your Own Fest, Olympia, WA. Photo: Victoria Wong.

***We are looking for a new content coordinator. Do you enjoy proofreading and Italian hardcore? Accounting and UKDIY? Drinking bottomless coffee and blasting KBD singles?***

***Get in touch: mrr@maximumrocknroll.com.***

**FRONT COVER:** Riña, photo by Dulce la Muerte.

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# LETTERS

Send letters to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. Letters may be edited for length. Response not guaranteed.

Hey, worldwide punks!

The (in)famous Russian punk tour van Gazelle of Death asks for your help! It desperately needs a major repair. Over the last seven years the Gazelle of Death existed on a minimum, often a shortfall budget and money raised at DIY tours was hardly enough for micro repairs that were often made with wire and scotch tape. At this point it's just unbearable, all the car's parts need to be changed or repaired.

Nobody knows how many tours Gazelle of Death had but it on its more than eighty big (4000 km–11000 km) tours its passengers were the residents of all the continents except Antarctica. Among Gazelle's passengers were TV Smith, Hero Dishonest, Active Minds, Lemuria, Krupskaya, We Will Fly, Rattus, MxPx, Bernays Propaganda, Black Rainbow, Kalashnikov Collective and more than hundred bands from all over the world.

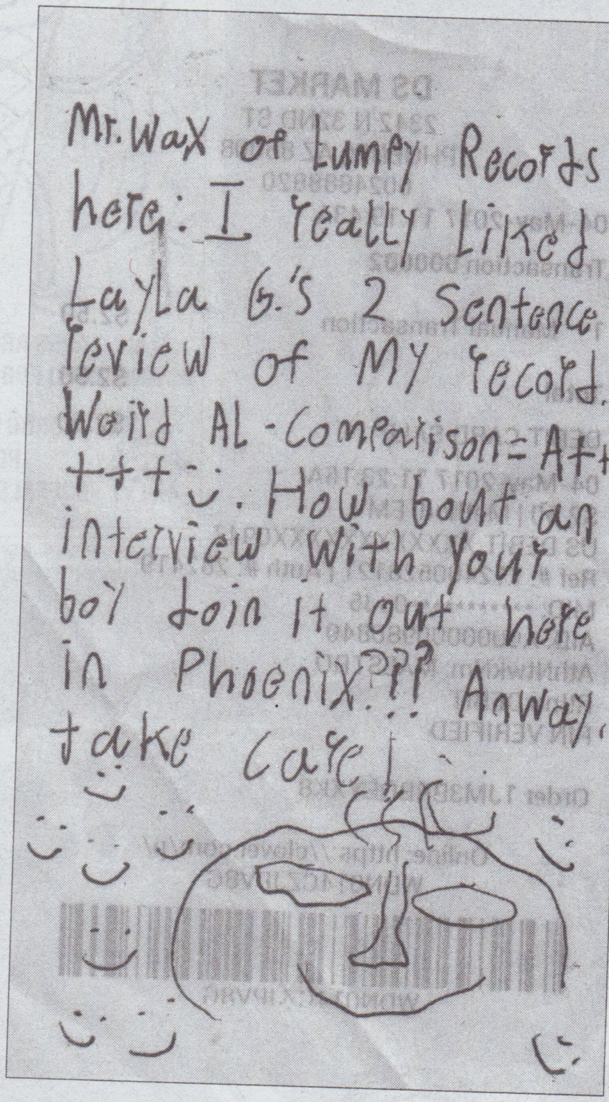
The Gazelle of Death became a character of a comic book and graphic novel. The first one is about Lemuria's Russian tour written by Mitch Clem (*Turnstile Comix* #3) and the other one is a pure Russian product, which soon will be translated into English.

At the moment Gazelle of Death needs $6,000 for a complete repair. We started a crowdfunding company at the website Planeta.Ru (planeta.ru/campaigns/gazelleofdeathnewlife), which will last until the end of June. Click on the FAQ to read an English tutorial about how to pay or donate any amount of money via PayPal: mpodpolye@yandex.ru.

Thanks a lot!

The Gazelle of Death crew

*Support these punks who are making it happen for DIY in Russia! Consider throwing a benefit show in your town in solidarity with the cause. We're always down to help amplify fundraising efforts for important DIY projects. Feel free get in touch with us if you're trying to finance a project that will benefit the greater DIY punk community, and stay tuned for an interview with Denis, the Gazelle of Death's driver, soon!*


Mr. Wax of Lumpy Records here: I really liked Layla G.'s 2 sentence review of my record. Weird Al-comparison = A+++ :). How bout an interview with your boy doin it out here in Phoenix?!! Anway take care!

*Dear Mr. Wax,*

*Thanks for writing. I'll give you the standard spiel (and this applies to any other publicity-hungry punks that are reading this): We are a contributor-driven magazine, which means no one needs to be invited to do an interview—you can just get your friend to do it and send it in! We operate this way for a few reasons, not least of which are a desire to decentralize editorial perspective (we want things from all over, not just things that those of us here in San Francisco are aware of!) and a belief in the importance of allowing punks to represent themselves in their own words and on their own terms. So sit down with a friend, have a convo, type it up and send it our way! We're looking for 2,000–5,000 words (including an intro) and 10–12 high resolution (300 DPI!) pics with credits. Show us your personality! We want questions beyond "what's your songwriting process?" and "how did you guys decide to start a band?" Dare to be stupid! Publication not guaranteed.*

*— Ms. Coordinator*

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**Night Voices Volume 1**
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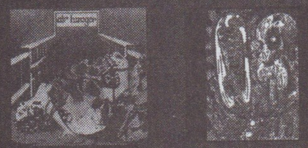

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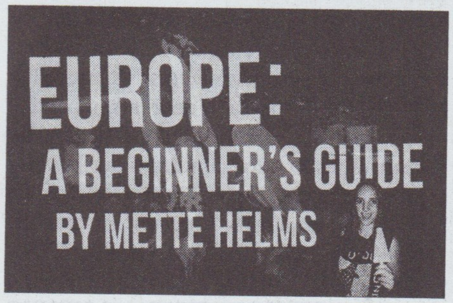



This month's column is about something that's bigger than punk yet very much connected to punk to me.

I work as a sound engineer and a technician in performing arts productions. A so-called "female sound guy" in an industry highly dominated by men. The first time I touched a sound desk was at seventeen at a punk show and now at twenty-six I have landed a permanent job at a prominent venue in the suburbs of Copenhagen.

Starting out, I never thought about the fact that I was moving into a field that in many ways wasn't meant for me. I was active in my local scene, loved going to shows and after spending my time booking a few shows, cooking and serving beer, I was bored already and I felt like getting my hands on those knobs was a natural next step. I'm a restless person and have never been good at social situations, so having a place to be at shows behind the desk felt safe.

After a few gigs following experienced technicians around, I was soon the only person in charge of the sound at a smaller scale punk show. It was pretty horrible. Not that the sound wasn't good, but the circumstances were extremely chaotic at the newly opened Ungdomshuset. Yet I learned a lot. Some of those things I even use to this day. My first advice for anyone wanting to learn sound is always to find someone experienced to shadow to learn the basics but to get your hands dirty as soon as possible. Sound is a trade that you learn from experience and experiments.

The first time I was confronted with my gender (or my small body really) was one of the first times I was moving gear with a bunch of men. I was struggling with the heavy speakers while it seemed like my moving buddies could juggle with them as if they were made of mere air. To this day, body strength and heavy gear is still my biggest inferiority—or so it feels. It's as if the size of speakers and flight cases are constructed to fit people with a certain shoulder width, and not for my frame.

Working in a male dominated industry led by physical work makes my inferior strength as a woman of my body size visible. Maybe it's mostly me that sees the inferiority. I clearly stand out from my colleagues, and career competition, and since no one mixes with their genitals, the outer appearance of body size and strength becomes a focus point for being "not a dude" working around men. I over-compensate for this by rarely asking for help. Asking for help shows my weakness and that I depend on others and can't do the job by myself because of my physical female appearance. Lately I've learned that knowing your limits and asking for help is a strength, not a weakness.

The question why I chose to become a female sound engineer always puzzles me. It's often viewed as a political action or as me taking a stand against the male dominated industry. It's funny how doing something you love and enjoy is viewed as a political action by others just because you happen to have two X chromosomes. Or, actually it's not funny. It's downright sexism, coming from whatever gender. Yes, I'm a woman. So what?

I've learned that I'm viewed as a political asset. As well as being a female sound engineer is considered a political action, others consider including a female sound engineer or stage technician in their production as a political action. *Look how cool, hip, and tolerant we are, we have a female engineer!* I've received plenty of messages asking me directly to do sound at a gig because I'm a woman. Not because I have a good reputation. Today's feminist agenda is great of course, but having a (young) woman in a position usually dominated by males has become a token for those wanting to show how tolerant and "in" they are, and is leading to an objectification of the female employment and volunteer work in these areas.

I'm not saying that female role models are insignificant. I strongly believe in female role models as a way of encouraging and motivating others to follow their dreams and enter fields that seem inaccessible to them because of their gender. I view role models not as individuals to be fascinated by and to want to be like, but as a character that shows that it's possible to follow a certain path. Not as someone to aspire to me, but someone to aspire to work with. To me, it's been significant that others have cleared some of the way for me in the past. I wasn't the first woman to do sound at punk shows in Copenhagen and I'm not the first female employee in the technical department of my current job. Not being the first means that (some of) the people around me have already adjusted to working with and around women. And that makes a chunk the way to being regarded as an equal to my male colleagues. Having a female technician isn't weird or exotic to them. Instead I can be viewed for my professional assets and what I bring to the venue.

Now, let's move out of the business "what I do that I love but also pays my bills"-context and into the punk universe. Punk can in many aspects create an environment to experiment and explore. Just look at how many bands there exist that are made of people who just picked up an instrument and play the same three chords over and over. Punk's ugliness and "no limits" approach to authorities and rules creates a space for those wanting to learn and expand their skills. Ideally, punk is a utopian place where skill sharing, co-creating and distribution of knowledge weighs higher than society's elite approach to individualism and perfectionism. Punk should be an ideal place to learn sound as the usual hierarchy within the sound community barely exists, but punk also has the poorest access to high quality gear. And you get to do sound for those bands who can barely play those same three chords over and over again…Nothing wrong with that, but "shit goes in, shit comes out."

The hot issue of the recent years has been the involvement of women in the musical aspects of the punk scene. There's no doubt that there's a large inequality in who is on stage. But look around at your next local gig, and I'm sure you'll see a man operating the sound desk. There's not much debate about gender inequality in the "behind the scenes" part of punk. But just as forming a band and standing on a stage in front of a crowd is more inaccessible to anyone who isn't a man in punk, getting started with sound or other technical skills is a challenge in punk, as well as in established society.

Now I've spat out enough negativity for now and it's time to look at this topic with

my "PMA-glasses" on. My point of view is that you cannot criticize something without proposing how to change the structures you reprimand.

The first step to making sound and other technical areas more accessible to women is to talk about it. Exploit the inequalities and suggest change.

Be open about inequalities in your local scene. Gender inequalities are a universal problem in punk and not a structure that a local scene can be blamed for (excluding the extreme cases). But openness and change is everyone's responsibility. Change happens from the inside.

Offer to share your skills. Give others the opportunity to learn from you. Through workshops, one-to-one teaching, having someone shadow you, etc. This can be done either individually or collectively.

Fight the loneliness of being the only woman in an area by hosting and welcoming female only workshops and talks about sound and other technical areas. Leave room for mistakes and "stupid" questions that are frowned upon in competitive male-dominated areas.

Stop saying "sound guy" and "lights guy."

If you're a woman or trans person interested in learning sound, my tips for getting started in the male-dominated world out there is to ask to shadow someone whose sound style you like. Ask to get your hands on the desk with their support and tips. These days, there are many options for support that weren't there when I started out. Get involved in a workshop or group. Soundgirls.org and the Soundsgirls.org Facebook group are great places to search for activities in your area (especially if you're in the US).

The history of the PERFORMING FERRET BAND should sound pretty familiar to anyone with even a cursory interest in scrappy, flipped-out late '70s / early '80s DIY in the UK: art-minded school friends acquire a reel-to-reel tape recorder and try their hand at making music inspired by the dryly absurd sensibilities of Monty Python and aided by "a broken tambourine, a mandolin case for a drum, a kazoo, and a pair of plastic sandals." Some more friends ultimately come into the fold, the band morphs into something more closely resembling a standard post-punk combo (now with guitar, bass, and legitimate drums), and in 1978, they record a cassette that finds its way to John Peel's radio program (naturally). The first three songs from that EP became a 7" single on the Dead Hippy label in 1980, which has just been reissued by Germany's Insolito Records with the addition of a fourth track called "Convenience" that had been previously unreleased until Hyped to Death's PERFORMING FERRETS CD anthology in 2008. There's that infamous quote from Mark E. Smith that "if it's me and your granny on bongos, it's the FALL," and if you were to add some shaky organ and amateurish melodica to that equation, it might as well be the PERFORMING FERRET BAND. Flatly-delivered vocals, seemingly non-sequitur lyrics, clattering drums, trebly guitar lines usually consisting of two or three notes at most, the textbook *Messthetics* band, really. The group's impossibly rare LP from 1981 is apparently also getting the reissue treatment soon (courtesy of Spain's Beat Generation label), so all of you FALL / HOMOSEXUALS / SWELL MAPS freaks out there will have twice the cause for celebration—you need both records, trust me! (Insolito, insolitorecords.bandcamp.com)

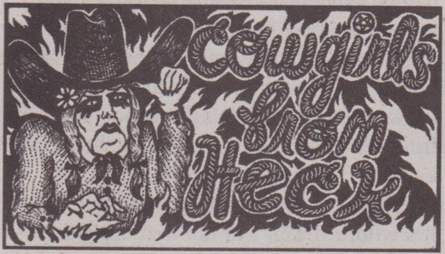
Everyone I know who heard those TERRY records from last year was completely taken by them (rightfully so), and if you also count yourself among the TERRY true believers, the new self-titled cassette from fellow Melburnians the STROPPIES should have you similarly smitten. There's an obvious reverence in these seven songs for many of the same foundational texts studied closely by the current cohort of Australian underground popsmiths that includes the likes of CHOOK RACE, DICK DIVER, and TWERPS—not surprisingly, the STROPPIES have some personnel overlap with the latter two. The unassuming dual vocal melodies and freewheeling keyboard in "Go Ahead" are descended straight from the bright-eyed jangle of Flying Nun's "big three" (the CLEAN, the BATS, and the CHILLS), while the comparatively moody "Celebration Day" pays tribute to the shambolic MODERN LOVERS-isms of the GO-BETWEENS's early singles, and "No Joke" recalls the sort of US indie rock / slacker-pop championed in the early-to-mid '90s by fanzine writers and college radio DJs with multiple BUTTERGLORY and PAVEMENT records in their collections. DIY pop perfection, because Australia really does it better.

Half of the STROPPIES are also in BLANK STATEMENTS, who have their own new tape on Melbourne's Hobbies Galore label as well. *Signs Are Rampant* largely dispenses with the chiming melodicism of the STROPPIES's more overt Kiwi influences, instead putting minimalist, super-rhythmic bass lines and wobbly, droning organ at the forefront of their skeletal songs. At their most raucous, BLANK STATEMENTS sound like a lost femme-punk band in the KLEENEX tradition, like on "Accelerate," which consists of little more than a minute of choppy snare hits, synth squealing in the background, and a delirious, repetitive group chant of "*accelerate and break!*" But overall, *Signs Are Rampant* leans much closer to the homespun, paper-thin aesthetic of the bands that occupied the fringes of the pre-C86 Rough Trade / Cherry Red post-punk milieu—the MARINE GIRLS especially, but with traces of DOLLY MIXTURE and YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS hiding just beneath the surface, and more than a few nods given to the K Records-backed primitive pop of fellow Aussies the CANNANES. Both cassettes are limited to 100 copies each, and I'd jump on them if you get the chance. (Hobbies Galore, hobbiesgalore.bandcamp.com)

Speaking of Flying Nun and the whole Dunedin sound, the brilliant all-female quintet LOOK BLUE GO PURPLE have often been lost in the shadow of some of their more well-known (and largely all-male) early-to-mid '80s contemporaries, although in my world, they've always been just as important as, say, the CLEAN, if not even more so. The three 12" EPs that they released between 1985 and 1988 have been incredibly hard to track down at non-collector scum prices for some time now, so *Still Bewitched*, Flying Nun's new LOOK BLUE GO PURPLE double LP anthology, is honestly a dream come true (and this particular dream even includes seven previously unreleased live songs!). As you'd probably expect from any band that was a part of Flying Nun's more pop-oriented faction, there's plenty of frenetic guitar jangle in the mix, but LOOK BLUE GO PURPLE's haunting multi-part harmonies, propulsive drumming, and flashes of darkly psychedelic organ paid one of the most sincere tributes to the VELVET UNDERGROUND in the 1980s, putting them on a similar wavelength as the FEELIES over in New Jersey at roughly the same time. The overlapping vocal melodies and knotted, shadowy post-punk undercurrent running through songs like "Hiawatha" and "Safety in Crosswords" also make it easy to understand why the band were often hailed as New Zealand's version of the RAINCOATS (especially during the latter's *Odyshape / Moving* era), while LBGP were never quite as spiky and ecstatically raw as their English counterparts—see the plaintive minor chords

and ethereal flute centered in "As Does the Sun" or "Days of Old," which aren't very far removed from the atmospheric drones of late '60s acid folk. We're barely halfway through 2017 and I'm already going to go ahead and call this one as the reissue of the year. (Flying Nun, flyingnun.co.nz)

*Say hey at ripitupstartagain@gmail.com. More sights & sounds at futuresandpasts.org.*




By the time this is published, you may have already forgotten about Record Store Day, but the memory of it still lingers with me. My friends and I run the only record store in Tallahassee. Each year, we spent weeks preparing for the onslaught of customers that we get every year on RSD. Each year, RSD draws at least four or five hundred people to our store as they desperately hunt for the limited edition titles that are released just for that day.

Despite the increase in customer volume and sales, I hate RSD with a passion. There are many reasons why I dislike it, most of which I share with Joe Steinhardt of Don Giovanni records, who wrote an article for *The Media* about RSD. His argument largely boils down to this: the major labels dominate record store day releases with titles that stores could not sell on an average day of business. These records are sold as limited edition fetish items, but for the most part they end up in the hands of people who try to flip them. At the end of the year (or even at the end of the month) most of them end up unplayed and unwanted. The titles that people *do* end up purchasing and keeping (say, Brand New's *Deja Entendu*) are expensive limited edition versions of titles that later go into print for a lower price. In my eyes, Record Store Day is a day for the major labels to dupe consumers. This year's top commodities were what I call "meme music"—the soundtrack to *Space Jam* and an Africa-shaped picture disc single of, yup, the Toto song "Africa." Other titles that were in hot demand were Dave Matthews Band box sets, the latest attempt by The War on Drugs to ape Don Henley, and reissues of fairly easy to find Prince singles. Many of these titles have been available in some format or another in the past, mostly on CD. If they were being issued for the first time, there was little demand for them. For real: does anybody need a vinyl pressing of an artist's session for Spotify? The major labels clearly think so. Every year, more and more unnecessary titles clog up the pressing plants.

To combat the cultural dominance of the major labels, we did our best this year to focus on independent music and labels to varying degrees of success. The most successful (and most unique) way we included independent music this year was through our friend Tyler Bisson. Under the name Audio Geography, Tyler creates lathe-cut 7"s for a living, and for this record store day, he did live cutting of discs for seven different local bands. Each one of these discs were created to order in real time, meaning that the person who bought the record had to wait about 5 or so minutes while the machine made the disc. Many people had never seen or heard of these plastic discs before, and several people bought them solely because they thought it was a unique and interesting prospect. At the end of the day, Tyler made and sold about 75 singles. Many of these records went to people who had never even heard of the artists before. Seeing people walk away with these local releases was easily the highlight of every single Record Store Day we've had.

This excitement for independent releases did not extend to the indie titles that we ordered for record store day. Perhaps they don't sell because the Record Store Day organization doesn't deem them "official" record store day titles. Or perhaps they don't sell because people do not know about them. But at the close of the day, the majority of the titles that we had left over from record store day were titles from the indie labels. It turns out that RSD fans would rather have Toto than titles from Television Personalities, Priests, or The Wipers. Who knew??

The conclusion I have reached from all these years working RSD is that the day is a way for the major labels to massively profit at the expense of the brick and mortar stores. I say expense because ordering titles from the major labels is a massive gamble. All of the ordering for RSD takes place before the list is available to the general public, so stores do their best to guess what people in their area would be interested in. If the stores guess incorrectly, they cannot return any of the titles that are sitting on their shelves. Those titles inevitably end up being sold below cost. Ordering for RSD becomes a balancing act of guessing which titles will definitely sell while minimizing shit that will sit around on the shelf all year.

Is there a way to fix the major label domination of RSD? With the way the music industry is now, I cannot see a clear solution. Much of physical media sales depends on the idea of the medium as a rare fetish object, a collectible item that the customer sees as only temporarily available. This is currently a standard practice year-long for most record labels (including the indies) but the major labels use this over and over again to spike sales for RSD. As I mentioned above, many of the RSD releases come into print on a larger scale within a couple of months. At some point, consumers may wisen up to this and purchase the cheaper product instead. I predict that the artificial scarcity of major label titles will inevitably lead to a burst in not just the record store day bubble, but the vinyl bubble in general. Hopefully that will drive more people to buy more titles from independent artists or labels across any format, whether it be digital, tape, vinyl, or CD. However the cynic in me expects many people to stop buying physical copies of new titles and to switch to streaming altogether.

Even though I hate RSD, I always end up buying some record store day titles. This year, I bought two metal titles, one of which I am sharing with you here.

**THE BODY – *RSD 2017* EP (Sisters In Christ):** Each year, New Orleans's excellent Sisters In Christ (run by Bryan Funck from THOU) releases a limited edition 7" for record store day. This year's release is a huge fucking downer of a record. The BODY are a two-piece experimental doom duo that are best known for the collaborative LPs they have released with artists as varied as BRAVEYOUNG, KRIEG, FULL OF HELL, and the aforementioned THOU. Their records explore a variety of different textures and have featured choirs, electronic elements, and harsh noise. All of them are united through the oppressive weight of the band's guitars and drums, which plod about at a doomy pace. Anyone expecting a straightforward metal release from this band is a fool, and the band continues its push into experimentation with this single. The A-side is a strong cover of BIG STAR's haunting "Holocaust," done relatively faithfully, albeit with swathes of noise and guitar distortion. The B-side, on the other hand, sounds like an unreleased BASTARD NOISE piece. Fans hoping for the BODY's doom stylings will leave disappointed, but this single is still strong.

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**NON RSD RELEASES**

**EXTREMITY – *Extremely Fucking Dead* LP (20 Buck Spin):** Tragically, there are almost no trans musicians that I can name in the extreme metal world. Perhaps trans people stay away because of the ideologies of many metalheads, or perhaps they feel unsafe and unwanted. Either way, there is only one trans metal musician that I can name: guitarist

/ vocalist Melissa Martinez-Hoadley from CRETIN, EXHUMED, and REPULSION. She is one of the members of the new (not nu) metal supergroup EXTREMITY, which also features members of AGALLOCH, VHÖL, LYCUS and VASTUM. EXTREMITY lives up to their name by meshing together the ideas from several distinct types of death metal. *Extremely Fucking Dead* is an incredibly varied metal album that also sounds like it was releases 25 years ago. Much of it owes a sizeable debt to Swedish and Florida death metal groups such as DISMEMBER or early DEATH, but there also moments where there is a grim, doomy atmosphere similar to early AUTOPSY albums. This is a strong album that most fans of old school death metal should appreciate.

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**SATAN'S HALLOW – LP (Underground Power):** I'm calling it right now: Chicago's own SATAN'S HALLOW has put out the best traditional metal album of 2017. Hell, this might be the best metal album of 2017. If you were to stick this record in a time capsule and put it in a record store somewhere, people would very easily think that it is some obscure NWOBHM album. Every single song is a perfect pastiche of the metal world circa 1982. There are elements of MERCYFUL FATE, RIOT, DIO, BLITZKRIEG, MANILLA ROAD, and a number of other incredible bands. Each song is full of incredible dueling guitar riffs and creative melodic guitar solos, but what really sells it for me is vocalist Mandy Martillo. Her vocals are crisp and forceful and her delivery is as good as the vocalists of any number of classic metal bands. If you prize melodic songwriting in your metal, SATAN'S HALLOW is precisely what you need to hear.

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**PYRIPHLEGETHON – *The Murky Black of Eternal Night* LP (Iron Bonehead):** Maurice De Jong has about as many projects as there are letters in PYRIPHLEGETHON. His longest running and most acclaimed project is the noisy black metal group GNAW THEIR TONGUES, but hopefully this new record under the alias PYRIPHLEGETHON will gain him some traction too. PYRIPHLEGETHON, with its spooky synthesizers and midtempo pacing, sounds like few modern black metal albums. Unlike most black metal releases, there is almost no tremolo picking to be found here, nor will you hear a single blastbeat. Instead, the album's languid pace and ominous atmosphere brings to mind the unholy pagan atmospheres of classic Greek metal bands like VARATHRON or early ROTTING CHRIST. If your ideal for a black metal album is to provide a soundtrack to rituals, then this should be next on your list.

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**CHEVALIER – *A Call To Arms* EP (self-released):** This Finnish speed metal quintet formed last year, but they already sound like masters of their craft. Their six-song EP *A Call To Arms* is a blistering exercise in technicality and speed. Its rapidfire songwriting bears strong influence from many great pre-thrash '80s metal bands such as ADX, MERCYFUL FATE, and EXCITER. Even the production values, which are murky (in a good way!) bring to mind a long lost demo tape from the glorious '80s heyday. MIDNIGHT wishes they could write a song as good as these folks. Hopefully the future releases from this band are as strong as this demo.

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**CRAVEN IDOL – *The Shackles of Mammon* (Dark Descent):** As a group, CRAVEN IDOL excels at creating complex, abrasive blackened thrash that is also easily palatable. Strongly influenced by the aggressive sounds of German thrash bands KREATOR and SODOM, CRAVEN IDOL's songwriting showcases a technicality and adventurousness that sets them in the same creative class as the best modern blackened thrash groups such as AURA NOIR. Each of the riffs on their sophomore album are pummeling and mean but are also melodic enough to be hooky. Not to be slept on!

*Why dontcha email Bradley some metal demos? deathpoemrecs@gmail.com Interested in lathe-cut 7"s? Check out audiogeography.com*

## i don't think that i need to sit here with you fucking dildos any more

*by Imogen Binnie*

A few years ago my band Correspondences recorded an album called Spiral Shell. It never really got a proper release, which was my fault, but a few months after we finished it Lee leaked some unmastered mp3s to some friends, and I guess they shared it with some of their friends. I guess the people who heard it were pretty into it.

That summer we did a little tour and played some of those songs, even though I hated the lyrics. But the music was cool and people were into it. Plus touring rules.

We played an incredible show that tour in Philly. I might have done a column about it at the time, I don't remember. Just one of those shows where maybe your expectations aren't that high but every band you play with is weird and incredible and queers, it's in a small room above a bike shop which is packed full of people who aren't being assholes, and it's summer so it's all humid and everybody is hot and sweaty and since everybody's gross nobody's self-conscious about it.

Hopefully you've played or at least been at shows like it.

So we play, then we hang out drinking cheap beer with friends we never get to see, watch some other weirdo bands, y'know. But two different people came up to me—to us, I guess—to show us tattoos. One was the line drawing of a glitchy nautilus shell I'd thrown together as a rough cover for that stupid record we weren't even releasing, and one was a line from the title song ("your spiral shell / can't keep you safe / from yourself").

People giving a shit about your music! It's wild. I mean, I'm not a visual artist or a designer or anything. But a few people have gotten tattoos of stuff I've made. I wrote this book called *Nevada* that people have gotten tattoos from, although they're usually things from the cover that my friend Julie Blair (who is a visual artist or a graphic designer or anything) designed, and one time I made this occult thing that a few people, including myself, got tattoos of. It's cool but also humbling to have someone get a tattoo related to something you made. Like it makes it feel like the thing you made is bigger than you are.

But this felt different. I dunno. Weird. I was high on a triumphant evening in the middle of a tour which had already featured some, um, less triumphant moments. I didn't have the headache which is normally my familiar every night of tour. And there was a door near the show space that led out to a roof where people were sitting and drinking and smoking where you could hang out and see all the lights of Center City. Just an awesome night.

And they weren't the first Spiral Shell tattoos I'd seen. There had been three others in the last four days. We'd made a thing that people really cared about, and now I was feeling conflicted, depressed and kind of self-conscious about blocking its release.

It's weird. Or maybe it's not weird. Maybe it's a thing you know about too, where you're so used to feeling anxious or stressed out that when you move out of that headspace to someplace better, you end up unconsciously finding something to latch onto that'll help you get back to that place of feeling shitty, because on some level it's what you're used to. It sucks, but it's hard for me to stay stoked.

I'm not trying to do a nautilus shell shaped narrative in this column, but this is actually what the song "Spiral Shell" is about.

So I was still stoked to be there and stoked about the show and stuff, but when we went

in for the last performer my mood had kind of crashed. It was quiet noise stuff, so everybody was sitting on the floor. Intellectually I knew it was an incredible way to end the night, my night was kind of fucked up.

By the fact that people liked a thing I'd been involved in making.

So okay. Long story short, we packed up our amps and drums and stuff, crammed 'em into Lee's truck, and then went to the house where we were staying.

I know a bunch of people in Philly, but we ended up staying at a friend of a friend's house because there was a spare room with two beds as well as a couch. So we go to this house somewhere way the fuck out in West Philly. Like so far out that you're basically in Bryn Mawr. But the house was awesome. I was stoked to be there as soon as we got there. That summer was the peak of the gothy witch punk thing (which never died and still rules), and this was, like, the most witchcraft house I'd ever been to. They had the whole house. It was decrepit, with classic Girls Who Get Shit Done punk house decor; dried out plants, Cristy Road art, books.

The housemates were cool and more than one was a trans girl. I wanted to move in.

I have a secret weapon for sleeping on tou—it's called "smoking weed before bed"—so I offered to take the couch. Emily and Lee retreated to the spare room and as I was laying down to go to bed, taking pills, grinding up buds and trying to figure out how naked it would be okay to get in this un-air-conditioned muggy Philly night, the girl who was hosting came in to say good night.

She was one of the more than one trans girls who lived in the house, this pudgy kid with her hair dyed black in a variation on the Marcelline the Vampire Queen haircut everybody seemed to have that summer. Snakebites. Winged eyeliner. Tattoos.

It seemed like she was intentionally coming to talk to me before I went to bed, but she seemed kind of shy. Like we did that awkward thing where you're like, "Hey what's up?"

"Nothing."

"Cool."

"Cool."

I pulled up a blanket to imply "okay good night" but she didn't leave.

And then she said the thing she came to say, kind of proud but very shy: "Um, I just wanted to show you. I gave myself a tattoo of the shell from the cover of your album."

She pulled her leg up onto the couch, kicking me pretty hard, then pulled a tall sock down to reveal a gloriously shitty six inch stick & poke of that nautilus shell. I mean, it was terrible. The best kind of stick & poke. The kind you give yourself when you want to self-harm but also you don't so you use the tattoo loophole.

She told me a pretty intense story about her life that isn't really mine so I won't share it here, and talked about how that song specifically had been really important to her in processing it, and thanked me.

But I was still feeling all fucked up and melancholy from earlier. Normally I would've just held it in. But trans girls are more important than other people. I try to be really intentional and let my defenses down when I'm with a trans women I don't really know; most of us have been hurt pretty bad and keep our walls pretty high, and usually we're looking for somebody else to let them down first so we can do the same.

That makes me sound smarter than I am. In reality, she had already let her defenses down, and I was the one struggling to reciprocate. And it was worse than it might normally be, because I was already feeling fucked up. About this thing she was stoked about.

She thanked me for listening and got up to head downstairs. But we live in community. If we don't let our guards down, we're just another stranger coming through town, another emotionally distant musician interchangeable with any other. And we all watch Pink Floyd's classic 1982 film *The Wall* every day. We know how that ends.

So just as she was getting up, I was like, "Actually can I tell you something?"

She was like, "yeah, definitely."

"Um. I feel pretty bad about this. But that album?"

I paused. I didn't actually want to say it.

"Every lyric on that album is about Mario Kart."

She was surprised.

"Do you know Mario Kart?" I asked.

"I, uh, I know *of* Mario Kart."

"I've been feeling shitty about this for months," I said. "I write most of our lyrics, and while we were working on those songs, I was talking about how sometimes I feel like everything I write is stupid; we have a song about herbal time travel, another about the sun dying and taking the earth with it. I was beating up on myself, like 'they just *sound* like they mean something. My lyrics are fucking terrible.' And Lee was like, 'they're actually really good,' so I was like 'I bet I could sound deep singing about the Nintendo 64 game that the boys I lived with when I was twenty were obsessed with. And Lee was like, 'I dare you.' So I did, and now all these people I care about have Mario Kart tattoos. And it's my fault."

I don't know what I expected from her, but I didn't expect it to be good. Maybe she'd be mad at me? Horrified? But she wasn't. Intentionally shitty tattoos are one thing but finding out that a tattoo—something about your body that you *do* have control over—is a lie? It's intense.

"Seriously?" she said. "*That's* what you're feeling shitty about?"

"I wouldn't let Emily put the album online. I've been feeling shitty pretty much ever since we recorded it—I even feel guilty, like Lee and Emily put so much work into the music and I made it into this heartless pomo empty hipster bullshit."

"Dude," she said. "You didn't fuck anything up. Don't you know about Baphomet?"

I knew *of* Baphomet, an occult figure with boobs and a penis, wings, a goat head, wisdom.

"Every time a trans girl makes a shitpost. Every time a trans girl gets invested in making something incredible which is also stupid, or tacky, or ugly, or ostensibly pointless but which is actually really important to her, Baphomet is driving and she's in the passenger seat. Baphomet is sneaking her around her own emotional defenses."

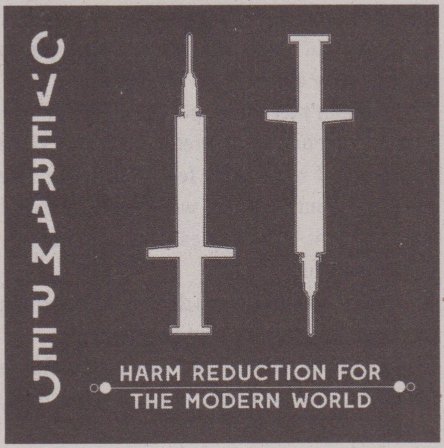
Now that she brought it up, I *had* had conversations about Baphomet as a patron saint of trans girls.

"You tried to make something stupid, but Baphomet wouldn't let you. You didn't make something stupid. Baphomet was working through you. It doesn't matter what you were trying to do. You made something powerful."

We talked a little bit more, although it was mostly her who was talking. I was kind of breathless about this revelation. Trans girls make awesome shit and whether this was a literal or figurative explanation for why, it made sense. Just like all this witchcraft stuff.

The last thing she said to me was something like "It can be hard for trans girls to believe in themselves. But to some extent, they don't need to. Baphomet believes in you regardless." Then she said good night, got up, said thank you again, and went downstairs. She closed the door on the way out. With the door closed, there was an incredible six-foot tall poster of Baphomet nailed to its back, done in the same gloriously shitty aesthetic as her spiral shell tattoo.

I turned off the light but in the city in the summer you need the windows to be open. You can't pull the blinds down. A square of light came through a window by the door, highlighting the figure on that poster. Like it was glowing. Baphomet watched over me as I got the only decent night of tour sleep that anyone has ever gotten. I didn't even smoke.




**Narcan b/w Reversing an Overdose**

Recently it seems that Narcan is the word on the tip of everyone's tongue. For an antidote that was relatively unrecognizable to the general public a few years ago, it now seems so ubiquitous that I can't go a day without hearing about it on the radio, internet, or TV. It's not that the hype isn't deserved; it truly is a wonder drug that saves thousands upon thousands of lives every year. But while Narcan has certainly witnessed its fifteen minutes of fame as this year's indisputable media darling, it's actually been around for decades. Naloxone, often referred to by the brand name, Narcan, has been approved by the FDA since 1971 and has been used by medical professionals to reverse overdoses since then. It stood the test of time through the heroin fads of the '70s and the '90s, and is just now receiving its well-deserved accolades. As this most recent opioid outbreak kills off young white suburban kids in droves, and we are in the thick of this subsequent opioid Renaissance where drug is seen as public health emergency, Narcan is finally earning the respect it warrants. So here lies your FAQ guide to everything you actually need to know about it.

Naloxone was patented in 1961. Emergency rooms and paramedics have had access to it since the early '70s. Police departments in many jurisdictions in the US have started carrying it in recent years. It's not available over the counter in the US, but you can get it from the pharmacy without a prescription in most states using something called a "Standing Order." Essentially, one physician writes a prescription that permits the distribution of Naloxone to any lay person. In these states, you can also usually get Naloxone from community-based organizations like your local needle exchange, drug users union, or drug user health program. Unfortunately, you can't get Naloxone without a prescription in Delaware, Kentucky, Minnesota, DC, and Virginia. If you live in any of these states and you need Narcan, shoot me an email and I will try to hook you up with someone who can get it to you.

I've been trying to come up with a definitive guide on which countries you can and cannot get Naloxone over the counter, but honestly I've been researching it for hours and it's too damn difficult to suss it all out. Laws are constantly in flux. Here are some countries where you can get it. They have been selected by me on a pretty much arbitrary basis: Australia, Canada, Germany, Italy, Norway. There are a list of suppliers in different countries at naloxoneinfo.org so at the very least you can see if it is available at all where you live.

Interestingly, Naloxone just made it to the World Health Organization's Essential Medicines list. The WHO releases this list every two years, and it's a kind of guide for countries to use to figure out what are the most important and effective medicines to supply. A list like this seems like such a distant concept here in the US where private drug companies have free reign to exploit the elastic nature of our will to live. After all, we are one of just two countries in the world that permits advertising of name-brand prescription pharmaceuticals to the public. However, this list is actually very widely consulted by other places in the world. So kudos to you, Narcan, for making the cut.

Of course the increased demand for Narcan has triggered an enormous price hike. You may have heard about a similar price hike in the Epipen, the live-saving antidote used to reverse severe allergic reactions last year. It's the same scenario minus the general public outrage. Authors from Yale University and the Mayo Clinic theorize on this discrepancy in the *New England Journal of Medicine*: "The naloxone situation has not garnered the type of attention or outrage inspired by that case, perhaps in part because of the stigma associated with opioid use."

These are the companies that make Narcan: Amphastar, Pfizer, Adapt, Kaléo, Mylan. Kaléo distributes an auto-injection form of Naloxone. Once you open the cap, it activates a recording that tells you exactly how to administer it—you don't need any training at all. This formulation was specifically designed to be accessible and simple with public-use in mind. But even though Kaleo's model is marketed towards the non-medical community and advertised as the gold standard of Naloxone, Kaleo raised the price of this model by 680% in just three years. In 2014, Amphastan's version of naloxone doubled in price. West-Ward Pharmaceuticals and Mylan followed suit. Pfizer's generic version of the drug was $1 per mL vial in 2005 and in 2014 was more than $15 per mL. With no subsidies, the price of Narcan starts at $125 for two doses and goes up to as much as $3,750. It seems salient that the tried-and-true method of getting people hooked on a cheap fix, then gauging them once they are dependent is favored by both legal and illegal drug peddlers. After inquiry from the US Senate and pressure to lower prices, all of these companies have come out with statements to try and justify their respective price hikes. None of them are legitimate. No matter how many racially diverse models they depict cuddling puppies, smelling roses, and walking hand-in-hand with their octogenarian partners on television ads, big pharma will never value human life over profit.

**What is an opioid overdose?**

Essentially, an overdose is when your body has more drugs in its system than it can handle. When a person takes too much of an opioid or a combination of opioids and other substances, it shuts down breathing. Opioids flood receptors in the brain and overwhelm the central nervous system causing breathing to become depressed. If a person doesn't get enough oxygen to the brain for too long it will cause their heart to stop beating and could cause brain damage, coma, and death. Many times, overdoses aren't instant. They can happen as soon as someone uses or up even a few hours after they have used. Due to the recent, very lethal, cut of dope that I talked about in last month's issue, overdoses are happening much more quickly than they used to, sometimes within minutes or even seconds of having used.

Naloxone, commonly referred to as its brand name, Narcan, is an opioid antagonist. It can be administered intravenously, intramuscularly, and intranasally. When Narcan is administered during an overdose, it kicks the opioids off of the opioid receptors in the brain and allows the person to start breathing again. It was developed to combat opioid overdoses and does not have any other purpose. But after the opioids are knocked off the receptors they don't just disappear. They are still swimming around the brain waiting for the Narcan to wear off so that they can re-attach to the opioid receptors like a magnet.

There are very few risks associated with Narcan, but one risk is that a person may enter precipitated withdrawal AKA dopesick. Therefore, after giving someone Narcan they may want to use again right away. It is very important that they do not use again for a couple of hours because they could overdose again once the Narcan wears off. You cannot get high from Naloxone, you can't build up a tolerance, and if you use it on someone who is not on opioids, it will have no impact. The only reason it was developed was to reverse an opioid overdose.

## What are Opioids: A Review

Opioids are a class of drugs that act as depressants, meaning that they slow down the central nervous system including breathing. When the drugs attach to opioid receptors in the brain they stop the body from sending pain messages to the brain, which is what makes them effective pain killers. Heroin, Methadone, Fentanyl, Morphine, Oxys, Percocet, Morphine, Codeine, Vicodin are all common opioids. Narcan *will not* work on other substances. If someone is overdosing on just Cocaine or pills, Narcan will not help them. However, if someone is overdosing on a mixture of opioids and some other thing, like say Xanax, the Narcan will work on the opioid part of the overdose. For some reason, a lot of people think that Narcan won't work on Methadone or on "the cocktail." It does, it just might take more Narcan than it would for a heroin overdose. Anyway, if you are not a doctor you can't diagnose why someone isn't conscious. Because Narcan is so low risk, it's recommended that you use it even if you don't know that the person has used opioids.

## Risk Factors for Overdose

***Changes in strength or purity level.*** Do a test shot (after you register give several small pushes to test the quality of the drug). Try not to buy from an unknown source. If you've been around the block a while, you might be able to get an idea of purity from the taste of the drug.

***Changes in tolerance, often from a period of abstinence.*** When a person does opioids on a regular basis, their body begins to develop a tolerance to the drug and can handle more of the drug than someone who is not used to taking opioids regularly. If you have taken a few days off, you will need less heroin to have the same impact. You will also need less heroin to overdose. This is why we see so many fatal overdoses occur right after a person gets out of detox or jail. So, take it slow. Know your limit. Don't let anyone else prepare your dose for you. You can always do more, but you can't do less.

***Drug mixing.*** Statistically, most people who use heroin use at least one other substance. This can pose an added risk. Mixing opioids with any substance can increase your risk of fatal overdose. This is particularly true of other depressants like alcohol or benzos. The more alcohol and / or downers you have in your system, the less heroin you will need to overdose. So, as much as possible, do one at a time! Remember that benzos can last in the system for 24 hours. If you can't space them far enough apart, you can stack: do your dope first and anything else later. Alcohol and pills come on more slowly and you may not get the full effects for a while after ingesting them. Also, pills and booze are more-or-less controlled. Heroin is a mixed bag, literally. Do the dope first so you can figure out what it is and how it is going to affect you. Remember to pace yourself.

***Physical health.*** Being sick, losing weight, decreased liver function (living with HIV or HCV); these are all things that can increase your likelihood of overdosing. Have body awareness, and again, don't have someone else fix your drugs for you. If you can't inject yourself and you always have someone else shoot for you, at least fix the drugs yourself.

***Using alone.*** Don't ever use alone if you can help it! This is currently the number one factor in fatal overdoses. The best way to stay safe is to use with at least one other person. Make sure that everyone has Narcan and knows how to use it. Take turns using. One person fixes and the other person waits at least ten minutes, preferably longer. If person A goes out, person B is there with Narcan. I can't tell you how many times I have heard of people using in pairs, they both go out, and one wakes up and the other never does.

**Prior overdose.** If you have overdosed before, you are more likely to overdose again

## How to Recognize an Overdose

So what do people look like when they are overdosing? General things to look for are any signs that the person may be unconscious or struggling to get oxygen. Their body will likely be limp, they may have really depressed breathing or may not be breathing at all. Look for change in color of skin, nail beds, and lips. When the brain is deprived of oxygen these features may take on a blue, grey, or purple hue. The person may have a slow or erratic pulse or perhaps no pulse at all. Oftentimes people may be making a snoring noise or a "death rattle," which is a sort of gurgling noise deep in the back of the throat. Although it may look or sound like a person is sleeping soundly, it could actually be a sign that the brain is struggling to get air into the lungs.

Sometimes it is hard to tell if someone is really high and in a heavy nod or if they are overdosing. When people are really high, their muscles tend to be super relaxed, like a sleeping person. They could have slowed or slurred speech. They could be nodding out which often looks like they might fall over either from a standing or sitting position, but catch themselves right before they fall—repeat in an infinite loop. If they are responsive at all to stimuli like you yelling, sternal rub, tap on the shoulder, they are not overdosing. It does not mean that they are not at risk of overdosing. If someone is taking a really long time to respond to you or it's really hard to wake them up, you should try to rouse them every few minutes. Getting the person up and walking around helps if they are able to do that.

Here are some things you should *not* do when you think someone might be overdosing: put them in a cold shower or dump water on them, put ice down their pants, inject them with cocaine or some other upper. These are methods that may have worked for some people in the past, but if someone is truly unconscious, none of these things are going to help them to regain consciousness. In fact, it can make things worse. A person who is overdosing is in respiratory distress, and doing any of those things can actually further suppress their breathing, or further deplete their oxygen supply.

People often ask me, "what if I see a person on the street who appears to be asleep or unconscious?" The answer is almost always to leave them the hell alone. If a person appears homeless and they are very clearly asleep and alive, i.e. you can see that they are breathing at a normal rate, they are moving around, talking, or showing other signs of consciousness you should leave them the fuck alone. If you are truly concerned that you have come across someone who appears unconscious, use common sense in accordance with your comfort level. If I come across someone who has passed out or lost consciousness, my instinct is to tap them on the shoulder, ask if they are okay and wait for them to tell me to fuck off before leaving. Not everyone is up for that so live your life for you.

Do not give someone Narcan if they are responding to you in any way. It won't hurt them, but it's fucking rude. If people are high and you give it to them it's going to make them dopesick and want to use again, which makes it way more likely that the overdose will return after the Narcan wears off.

## How to Respond to an Overdose

What does the person look like? Do they look like they may have lost consciousness or are in a deep sleep? If so, try and get them talking. Call the person's name, clap your hands close their ear, play any Throbbing Gristle record at full volume. If they aren't responding to you, trying tapping them on the shoulder or patting their knee. No luck? Move to a sternal rub. Make a fist and place the knuckle on your middle finger directly on the person's sternum—AKA breastbone, where their ribs meet. It's usually directly between a person's nipples. Apply firm downward pressure and rub your knuckles up and down against the person's sternum. This is the safest way to

inflict pain on someone and to get them to respond. Try it on yourself right now. You know you are doing it right if it hurts. If you can't get to a person's chest, you can also do the same thing on their upper lip. Just make sure they don't have anything in their mouth. If they don't respond to any of these things, then the next thing you want to do is to call an ambulance.

If and when you do call 911, 999 or whatever combination of numbers constitute an emergency where you live, tell them you are calling for a person who isn't breathing. Here's why: A) It is true. B) It will get the highest priority and fastest response time. There's some evidence that shows that mentioning drugs on a 911 call could slow response time. This varies widely based on where you are, and, anecdotally, I think this has changed in the last few years along with the public perception of drug users. But, alas, stigma is timeless. Better safe than sorry. There are some protections afforded to the person calling for an ambulance and the person overdosing that vary based on where you are and what the Good Samaritan laws are where you live. More on this later.

If you have to leave the person to call 911 or for any reason at all, make sure you leave them in the recovery position so that if they have to throw up they won't choke. There are lots of videos online that show you how to do this but here is a brief summary: "With the person lying on their back, kneel on the floor at their side place the arm nearest you at a right angle to their body with their hand upwards, towards the head. Tuck their other hand under the side of their head, so that the back of their hand is touching their cheek bend the knee farthest from you to a right angle carefully roll the person onto their side by pulling on the bent knee the top arm should be supporting the head and the bottom arm will stop you rolling them too far open their airway by gently tilting their head back and lifting their chin, and check that nothing is blocking their airway."

Alright, so an ambulance is on the way, now what? Figure out if the person is breathing or not and perform any necessary rescue breathing. You want to look, listen, and feel for signs of breathing. Look at their chest. Can you see it rise and fall? If so, is it shallow and slow (less than eight times per minute)? Put your ear close to the person's mouth. Can you hear any signs of breathing? Put your cheek close to the person's mouth. Can you feel their breath on your cheek? If you answered "no" to any or all of these questions, it's time for rescue breathing.

Rescue breathing is so damn important, at least just as important as the Narcan. I cannot overstate how important rescue breathing is. Rescue breathing, rescue breathing, rescue breathing, rescue breathing. Now hopefully you won't forget it.

Here's how: Do a quick finger sweep to make sure there is nothing in the person's mouth that they could potentially choke on. Tilt the person's chin up to make sure their airway is open. Pinch their nose with your fingers, take a deep breath in and form a seal with your mouth over their mouth, breath out into their mouth making sure you can see their chest rise and fall. The odds that you can contract anything from doing mouth-to-mouth are exceedingly low, but you can use a breathing barrier for this part if you have one. You can also use your t-shirt or another piece of cloth between your mouths. Give two rescue breaths with five seconds in between each one. After you've done two breaths, that's when you are going to give Narcan. Of course if you have someone else with you have them assemble the Narcan and you continue to do rescue breathing until the person starts breathing on their own. Don't bother with CPR unless you are trained and confident doing it. Trying to find a pulse on someone can be really hard and a waste of valuable time if you don't know what to look for. The most important thing is that they are getting oxygen and getting Narcan.

So now the fun part. If you have the classic multi-step Narcan, you are going to pop off both yellow caps from the barrel and the purple or red cap that is on the vial of Naloxone. If you have the nasal piece OR if you have a needle, screw either onto the skinny end of the barrel. Now take the open vial of Naloxone and place it on the wider end of the barrel. GENTLY twist the vial of Naloxone on there while applying light downward pressure—like screwing in a light bulb. You don't want to risk accidentally spraying and losing any of the medication so do it with a light touch until you start to feel resistance. Once you feel the push-back and you can't screw anymore, you are good to go.

If you have the nasal piece, place the tip in the person's nostril. Make sure their head is still tilted up so none of the medicine drips out. Push down on the Naloxone vial and spray half in one nostril, half in the other. If you have the fancy new 4mg single step nasal spray, take it out of its packaging. It doesn't have a cap on it so just stick it directly in the person's nose until your fingers are touching the nostril and push the button on the bottom of the container. Do it all in one nostril. Be extra careful not to push the button until it is securely in the person's nostril, otherwise the whole dose will spray into the air and be wasted.

If you have the needle, you are ideally going to wipe down the person's shoulder or thigh with an alcohol wipe to prevent them from getting an abscess or other infection. If you don't have one, whatever, fuck it. They can deal with the repercussions when they are awake and alive. Push the needle into the person's shoulder or thigh just like you would if you were giving a vaccine. Push down on the vial of Naloxone until it's gone.

And for fuck's sake, *do not* spray it in anybody's mouth. It will not work. The spray only works on mucus membranes. That means it goes in the nose, or in worst case scenario, in the anus. That's right. If you only have access to nasal Narcan and you can't get to the person's nose for some reason—say maybe they fell on their face on their way out and broke their nose—the only other orifice it will work in is the asshole. Do what you will with this revelation.

Sometimes Narcan can work within just a few seconds and sometimes it takes a few minutes. It can take up to five minutes for each dose to work. Once you have given the person one dose, continue to do rescue breathing until they come to or until they start breathing on their own. If the person has other drugs or meds in their system, which is likely, they may start breathing on their own but they may not regain consciousness for a while. That's fine. The most important thing is that they are breathing. If you have given them one dose and are still doing rescue breathing and nothing has changed after two minutes, go ahead and administer the second dose and repeat the preceding steps. Repeat this process until they regain consciousness, until EMTS arrive, or until they start breathing on their own.

It's really important to know that Narcan doesn't usually last as long as opioids. So it's possible that you might revive someone, they may be conscious and feel fine, and then the Narcan wears off and the overdose returns. They may be standing up or walking and just sort of fall over. I've seen it happen quite a few times. That's why it's important to stay with the person for at least two hours after you have given them Narcan or until they are in medical custody. Try your damnedest to make sure that the person doesn't use again while they still have Narcan in their system. Even if they are dopesick, using more heroin while there is Narcan in their body is going to make them feel worse and it's going to make it way more likely that they overdose again. Also remember that once you have overdosed you are more susceptible to overdosing again, so make sure the person knows that they are at greater risk for at least 24 hours after being Narcaned.

**Good Samaritan in the US**

As promised, here's some information about the Good Samaritan Law. Good Sam was

developed to encourage people to seek out medical help in overdose situations. At least 37 states and the District of Columbia have some form of a Good Samaritan law. Generally, these laws grant immunity to the person calling 911 and the person overdosing from charges of possession of drugs or paraphernalia. The law does not cover other people at the site, just those two. However, the impact of Good Sam varies. Some states provide immunity that will protect you from a violation of probation, pretrial, or parole. Some don't. In many places, The Good Samaritan law won't protect you against possession charges if you:

a) You have an open warrant and they decide to ID you.

b) You have enough drugs on you for them to charge you with "intent to distribute" which varies / is subjective.

c) Overdose events won't always be kept private in public housing or in custody cases.

That being said, it is so important for people to call an ambulance, especially now. Oftentimes Narcan and rescue breathing are not enough to keep someone alive. It is preferable that you stick around with a person until EMTs arrive. But despite the fact that many more people survive an overdose where they received medical intervention, the majority of people witnessing an overdose still do not call for an ambulance. Given the contentious history between drug users and the police, I can't fault people for their hesitance. But at the very least, it will save a lot of time and potential heartache to figure out a plan of action before you use with anyone. So if you are calling and you feel like you have to flee the scene, tell the dispatcher *exactly* where the person is. Make sure that they are in an easily accessible spot. For example, if you are in someone's apartment, leave the door wide open or move the person to the hallway so that EMTs can get to them. And make sure that you leave the person in the rescue position. If you have any Narcan, give it to the person before you take off and leave the container at the scene so they know what to do when they can get there. If you haven't had occasion to call an ambulance before, know that the operator is going to keep you on the phone and ask you a bunch of questions that aren't going to help you or your friend. Tell them where you are and what's happening and then hang up. An ambulance will come regardless.

*So there is your comprehensive guide for dealing with an overdose. Go forward and save lives. For questions about Narcan and how you can get it / suggestions / general gossip or shit-talk: dearauntiehazel@gmail.com.*

**An Open Letter to Mr. Kurt L. Darrow, CEO and President of Laz-E-Boy Incorporated**

Greetings Mr. Darrow, my name is Turbo Jorgensen. I am a member of IATSE Local 489 employed as Scenic Painter for TV and movies here in Pittsburgh, PA. (Need verification? Just ask Denzel.) My coworkers and I routinely work 60 hours a week and on occasion, work straight thru the weekend. When lunch time rolls around we are forced to make the better of a bogus situation and adapt to our meager surroundings; some sit on the ground or on upside-down 5 gallon buckets—which forces the sitee to adopt a pitiful posture that makes them look like they're about to take a dump. And it's a sad sight to see a tired worker on a Thursday afternoon trying to catch a few Zs lying out on a concrete loading dock using their flannel as a pillow. Is this not America?! I think there is a better way and that better way involves your company's trademark "Reclina-Rocker®" technology! I am writing to offer Laz-E-Boy Inc., a once in a "couch-time™" (wink) opportunity to sponsor the rest and relaxation of Local 489! Did you just gasp?!

The benefits of the partnership between Local 489 Scenic Painters and Laz-E-Boy Inc. are unimaginable! I should note, Grips and Carpenters, though members of 489, would be barred from partaking in the comfort of any chairs or sofas you gift to us, mostly because they all drive new F-150s which are pretty much just big comfy chairs driven around by dickheads. Anyway, before we delve into what you can do for us, let me tell you about the exciting things we can do for you! I am fully prepared to propose to create a T-shirt design incorporating the Laz-E-Boy logo and the IATSE seal. These shirts might be printed on 100% USDA Union-made American cotton—or we could integrate your world-famous brownish corduroy material and create something more akin to a Laz-E-Boy / 489 "drug-rug" thing. Really, the ideas are endless and the options are only bound by what my boss is willing to spend on t-shirts and / or (def, or) itchy ponchos. How tentatively exciting!

For a moment, let's set aside the anticipation of the idea of swag and get down to biznass: We need like ten kush recliners and one of those seats-fourteen, rich-uncle, "bonus room" sectional sofas—also reclinable and including the day-bed / chaise lounge. Could we do multiple chaise lounges? Probably doesn't need to be said, but all sitting apparatuses should have cup holders and be upholstered in an easy to spray-paint material. But not leather cuz we're not trying to sweat hard while we're on break from sweating hard. Ya dig? Maybe like, ultra-suede? I don't know, that's your area of expertise and it'd be arrogant of me to tell you your business. But it needs to be able to take paint so we can stencil warnings to the Carps and Grips to back off. They won't listen, but that's what filing grievances are for, right? ;) (wink)

I know, for a fact, that with the help of the professional sitsmiths at Laz-E-Boy Inc., IATSE Local 489 Scenic Painters (specifically our crew only) will be able to finally rest harder than we work. Thank you for your time, I anticipate your response.

In Laz-E-ness & Solidarity (That's the t-shirt slogan!!!),

Turbo Jorgensen

P.S. I don't know how your day's going, but I've included a grip of Oi! reviews that I thought you'd find interesting. Read them at your leisure...In one of your chairs.

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**BOOZE & GLORY – *Chapter IV* LP (Burning Heart):** Am I even allowed to review stuff on Burning Heart? Whatever. *Chapter IV* finds B&G playing a very polished version of streetpunk that wouldn't be out of place on an iHeartRadio "Rock" station. I'm looking for any sign that this shit represents any part of the outside of any group. It's like new-new DROPKICK MURPHYS level of norm. I appreciate that their lyrics delve deeper than a lot of nu-Oi!—mostly about aging out teenage hang-ups and confusion—but the slow tempo and *constant* use of gang vocals turns this into a snoozer fer sure. B&G are still shaved I guess but this feels like music for retired skins and bar bloats.

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**COCK SPARRER – *Forever* (Pirates Press / Chase the Ace / Randale):** So, COCK SPARRER, where are they now? Apparently continuing to write catchy-as-MRSA pop-Oi! that builds on their past victories, instead of diminishing them. The tone of *Forever* is rousing. Even on tracks like, "Somebody's Brother, Somebody's Son," which is about the lasting repercussions of violence, the Gang and I are toe-tappin and singing along, *"And when it's all over / It's over forever / You can't change what's been done / A flash of the knife on a cold dark night / Somebody's brother, somebody's son!"* But fear not, The You'll-

Never-Walk-Alone ethos the band has kept up for 40 years is present and accounted for on songs like "One by One," "Gonna be Alright," "Every Step of the Way," and "Us Against the World." COCK SPARRER knows how to make a record their base will enjoy. There's no heavy-handed preaching or sharp stylistic shifts. The band stays true to what has made them the longest running Oi! band around: writing catchy tunes that give weight to the workaday world...Straight stunner. *"I'll be there! Every step of the way! / The strength to give you courage! To fight another day!"*

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**COMBAT FORCE – *Demo* CS:** Urgent?! Blown-out?! Angry?! Oi!?! Four songs, the longest clocking in at a minute. These dudes are from Denver but I get the sense they don't go in for Liberal weed-yuppie work-from-the-paleo-café fuckery that infests that town now. Their song "Scumbag" contains these strong words: *"I see thru your bullshit / I see thru your lies / Your "social-justice" is just a disguise / Your sheltered reality will crumble and fall / Revealing the scumbag pervert you are!"* You know the drill, SHEER TERROR, 86 MENTALITY, SKRAPYARD. *"Snapping spines and wrrrrringing necks!"* is the quote to yell around HQ. It's replaced *"I've got bills to paaaaay!"* (combatforce.bandcamp.com)

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**DUFFY'S CUT – *Killers on the Dance Floor* LP (Oi! The Boat):** The singular DUFFY'S CUT are here with their debut LP. While bandsaplenty are mining junkshop glam and screaming for more cow-bell and hand-claps, DUFFY'S CUT are living in that scene from Quadrophenia when Sting is dancing to "Louie Louie" and channeling the groove of BOOKER T & THE MGS—and WILSON PICKET by extension with their cover of "Ninety-Nine and a Half (Won't Do)". It's Oi!, it's garage, it's RnB... *"I got a check coming Friday if / I can stay outta the hoosegow / Yeah! / I gotta keep it moving..."* Feels like sweating in the sun on a Philadelphia summer day. The antithesis of right-angle art-punk.

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**THE ENFORCERS – *Demo* CS:** Dark and menacing Oi! from Calgary...Or Lethbridge? This shit is anti-rightwing...But maybe not left-wing? I can't tell. The cover art is pretty sick showing a constipated looking skin stomping around with a spiked club and a big Canadian flag (sorry Frenchies, *l'Unifolié*). But don't melt just yet my little snowflakes! They've got a song about smashing the Alt-Right – peep: "It's got a new name and it's got a new face/ There's a new avenue for spreading racial hate/ They don't got a uniform/ They blend in with you and me/ Try to turn you on your brother/ They don't want the unity/ Alt-Right!" They also cover "Ultraviolence" by THE OPPRESSED and seem to be into total chaos...Like breaking everything...Not the clown-punk band. It's good. According to the band their EP comes out in August. (theenforcers.bandcamp.com)

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**PETITE – *Demo* CS (self-released):** Oh Portland, the city you'd least expect to have an NBA team also consistently has some of the best punk in the US of A. Weird huh? I don't know. What I do know is that the New Blood section of Maximumrocknroll.com finally paid off! PETITE describe themselves as, *"Chaos En France* walks in on No Future Records knockin' boots with Riot City" and I can kinda hear all that. Mostly it just sounds *punk* and offers a contrast to most of the pinpoint genre aping releases that I listen to—and enjoy. Granted PETITE still fit into the pantheon of bands worshipping at the feet of UK82 pogo; they ably cover the STRIKE's "Gang Warfare." Fans of WILD MOHICANS, PMS 84, NUCLEAR SPRING, take note. (petitepdx.bandcamp.com)

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**UNION BLOOD – *Working Class Pride* EP (Crom / Crowd Control / Spirit of the Streets):** Fuckin' smiley bouncy-bass tattoo shop streetpunk. Fuck. Named after the RANCID song maybe? Makes sense. I like RANCID. This band? Not so much. Also, polished Oi! and streetpunk bands making pro-music videos need to knock it off. Clean Freds and Sambas don't read as "working class rebel" it says "Tech-Food Blogger" or "My Uber driver." This record makes my face scrunch up in the same way as when the cat drops a freshie in the litter box.

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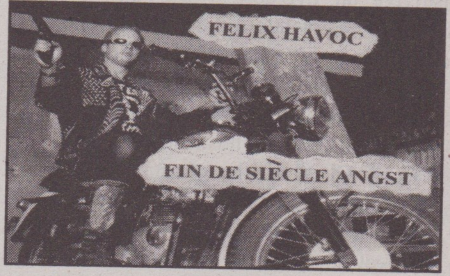
**V/A – *This is Montreal* EP (Aggrobeat / Baldy Sound):** On this little four-way the streets of Montreal are represented by the PROWLERS, KING CANS, SHOTCALLERS, and TORMENT. The PROWLERS and KING CANS follow the same path of heavy streetpunk that was paved by Montreal forebears STREET TROOPERS and IMPACT. PROWLERS give an ode to their crew, "Prowlers Crew" while the KING CANS's song, "Fighting Drunk" is about being the biggest dickhead in the bar...Not really but that's what I'd call the dude who yelled, *"Get out my face or get punch in the face / Not gotta take it outside, right here right now / Pay me another whisky now!"* Though the chorus is fer sure catchy with the gruff vocals bellowing out, *"Fighting drunk in the bar / I wanna ride in a police car!"* Yer call buddy. SHOTCALLERS tune, "40 Roses" is a tense street rock take with lyrics in French that Goog was no help with. TORMENT close things up with a fast No Future running-in-boots Oi! kicker called, "Chosen": *"Pass on by if you know what's good / On Solomon's lane, it's understood / Seventeen steps to Duckworth Street / In the chill of the night, you can feel the heat / Names written on the wall / If you've met one of us, you've met us all..."* That's what I'm talking about! They put out a tape in 2015. Give us more! All in, *This is Montreal* is a winner. There's something satisfying and charming about a scene focused release like this. Aggrobeat, Baldy, good job.

**ENDNOTES:**

+ If you love that UNION BLOOD record, explain it to me: AmericanBootGang@Gmail.com

+ Not all Carps are Dickheads (ACAD?); they still don't get to use our comfy chairs.

+ Extra credit: find the "Moon over Marin" riff hidden somewhere in the new COCK SPARRER record and you'll win an Oi!-Prize (it's just a recycled No-Prize I got back in '89 for pointing out that it was stupid the West Coast Avengers would wear their full costumes while having a team BBQ / pool party. Hawkeye wearing an apron and chef hat over his purples is forever burned into my brain).




Tim invited me to write a column for this magazine over twenty years ago. If you had told me back then that he would pass away young, but two decades later *MRR* would soldier on, run by a bunch of Ivy League Postdoc types, I would have raised an eyebrow, but deemed it plausible. However, if you had told me that in 2017 the big thing would be French Oi!, I would have fallen on the floor laughing. *Chaos En France* is the new *Hardcore Unlawful Assembly*.

Supply and demand, the ruthless "unseen hand" of the market is devastatingly brutal when it comes to record pricing. If you spend any time entering records from your collection into Discogs and look at the prices you will see how huge numbers of records have been driven down to $1 or $2 regardless of merit, while a handful are in the four figure "bonzer" realm. One notices, that some of the most sought after releases, are the rawest, most pissed off and aggressive sounding punk and hardcore, while almost every band's later more polished output is next to worthless. Which

makes one wonder, why are so many bands / musicians trying to so hard to be polished and professional when only other musicians care about this stuff? Why not play real raw music with energy, clearly this is what the market demands?

But seriously, set the way back machine for 1978 and check out some more raw '70s Euro punk.

One of the rarest and most sought after ragers from this era is the P.I.G.Z. *Bloody Belgium* 12". This band entered and won the "First Belgian Punk Contest" a sort of battle of the bands, with the first prize being a record deal on the label JW's Records. A three song 12" was the result and it's a monument to pissed off raw punk energy. Last month we talked about CHAINSAW, whose raw and blaring punk rock sounds established a tradition of loose and wild punk in Belgium in the late seventies, and P.I.G.Z. took it to the next level. There is a sneer of SEX PISTOLS type snotty punk, but the riffing and guitar sound is a throwback to Detroit proto-punk, sort of like a rawer, looser, punker DOGS "Slash Your Face". A tiny quantity was actually pressed and an even smaller number on pink vinyl. While we are discussing supply and demand and record pricing, note that one sold on Discogs for 1000 euros within a few hours of being listed. Ugly Pop records reissued this a few years ago so it should be widely available if you are only interested in the content but not the collectability.

Onto a Dutch rager—HELMETTES have one 7" from 1978. A classic case of a one off / side project that turns out to be better than most "real bands," HELMETTES was the brainstorm of a local Amsterdam punk character who used the band GOD'S HEART ATTACK as a back up band to record an obnoxious punk single and do a few gigs. It's hard to tell if the music is meant to be tongue in cheek, or a sincere representation of the goals and aspirations of this mob of Amsterdam punks. Regardless, it's a legit punk shocker with a great kind of flanged out guitar tone and snotty punk vocals. This one has risen from obscurity over the years from being something of a novelty item, to being canonized in '77 Euro punk lore due to its inclusion on comps and notoriety with collectors. It has been reissued twice in the past few years and should not be hard to find. According to the internet, this band reformed and has recorded new material and is playing gigs. I was afraid to click on any of this material, because I do not want my image of spikey hair, leering, skinny ties, and torn suit jackets corrupted.

Next up a German banger—the HONKAS *Lied Fur Fritz* 7". This isn't from the late '70s—it's more like '77 in '82, a throwback to the raw sounds of 77, from four years later after everything had gone to shit. It's on Pogar Records, a real quality outfit from Berlin who also brought us MALINHEADS, VARUKERS, OLHO SECO, and VORKRIEGSJUGEND. This 7" has a loose, fucked up, raw punk sound but a few of the songs have great catchy melody like the more tuneful '77 bands from Finland or Sweden, then it degenerates back into a raw fucked up mess. I couldn't find much any info about this band, but I really hope they were angry punx and not dilettante art student types creating this fucked up mess.

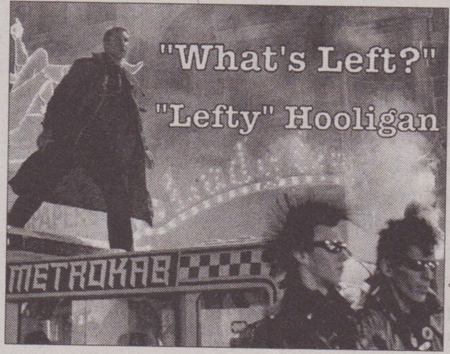
I am supposed to be writing about '77 punk, but I can't help but dig out some more of the jams on Pogar, I don't know who ran this label, but they were *real punk*. MALINHEADS were from Berlin and had two 7"s, which are at the pinnacle of German '80s hardcore. This band took its cues from UK bands like VARUKERS, DISCHARGE, ICONS OF FILTH, and the Swedish and Finnish bands citing the same influence. The *Medical Fame* 7" has a cold, dark tone like old Norwegian bands. There is a raw desperate energy to this record that evokes the cold war, despair, rage and emptiness, a kind of vibe that is missing from a lot of today's hardcore, though often imitated. From the photos of this band they looked like real punks, studded jackets, spiked hair etc. I always get disappointed when I hear a great raw hardcore record and turn it over the photos are guys with long hair and high tops wearing jamz and Oakleys.

MALINHEADS have another even sicker 7" *Hoax* also on Pogar. I guess it's properly called *Probegepogt aus Spandau* but no one I ever met calls it that. The guitar sound is so much harder and sicker on this one, and it sounds like a sped up VARUKERS, or maybe contemporary Finnish bands like TAMPERE SS or KAAOS. This one was reissued in 2010 and is probably due for another press soon.

VORKRIEGSJGEND have a killer EP on Pogar, *Heute Spass, Morgen Tod*, which was released in 1983. There are quite a few copies of a Brazilian pressing as a 12" around. The cover of the record is a destitute looking squat, which sets the tone for more Cold War Berlin desperation and anger. This band has more of a straightahead UK82 vibe, maybe like VARUKERS, ULTRA VIOLENT, or ABRASIVE WHEELS. That is to say the songs are hardcore, but a bit catchier, with more choruses, but still a fast pace and hard drive.

Let's talk about another German band with a similar name VORKRIEGSPHASE. This band was not on Pogar, but they are also raging at the very next of levels. The *Scheisse Krieg* EP from 1983 is on the original sketchy label Rock-O-Rama Records which unlike Pogar, was probably run by music business types and not real punks. VORKRIEGSPHASE sound like a fucked up mix of DISORDER, KAAOS, CHAOS UK, and the like. It's raw, distorted and fucked up, a little sloppy, but coming together enough to hit home hard. When the needle drops on "Scheiss Kreig" you are moshing, the intro bust is like a hammer blow, and the riff is like a Berlin Chainsaw Massacre. This band has an LP and some demos too, but to me they are not nearly as good as this EP.

Well, it's happened again—you've just read a thousand words about hardcore / punk 7"s from the late '70s and early '80s.




"Welcome to our humble abode," Jake greeted us at the front door with a bow, doffing his dented black top hat with a flourish.

I was with a gaggle of fellow peaceniks from the Action Committee for Peace and Justice in Ventura. We were visiting Jake and Connie's home, a rented two-bedroom bungalow in Ojai. It was a balmy summer night in 1970.

I turned eighteen in a month and was required to register for the draft, having graduated from high school. As a peace activist in good standing, an anarchist pacifist with plans to pursue a Conscientious Objector deferment, I was freaked out. I'd also just started smoking marijuana or, more precisely, I'd just started feeling the effects after having inhaled for several weeks before. I wanted some smoke to calm my nerves.

"Hey Jake," I said to the tall, skinny UCSB student wearing a tie-dyed vest. "Do you know where I can score some grass?"

"Connie can give you a referral," he laughed, then tossed a thumb over his shoulder. "She's somewhere back there."

The party was wall-to-wall, with people also crowded into the rambling backyard. Sixties rock music blared, at the moment "Buffalo Springfield." Most in attendance wore some sort of head gear, as hats were one of the party's themes. Long hair and marijuana smoke abounded, as did tobacco smoke and denim apparel. I was tempted to ask any of the individuals passing around joints to pass one my way, but I was shy. Besides, I was

interested in quantity, an ounce at least, and I didn't want to get fucked up before negotiating the purchase. I found Connie, a zaftig woman who also attended UCSB, in the tiny kitchen pouring shots of tequila and arranging them on a serving tray. She wore a colorful Spanish peasant dress and an incongruous brown fedora. I declined when she offered me a shot, as I hadn't yet started drinking alcohol.

"Anybody you know selling any grass?" I asked.

"Nigel's got weed, acid, mescaline, coke, crosses, reds, anything you want." She smiled and downed some tequila. "He's around somewhere. Black bowler hat."

Just then, a pair of scruffy males in their thirties I knew all too well from various anti-war meetings barged into the kitchen, arguing and exchanging insults. One wore a teal Mao cap with a Peoples Liberation Army star, the other a dark gray Bolshevik cap à la Lenin with a Red Army star. As they upped the volume of their row, Connie rolled her eyes at me, and hastily exited the kitchen carrying the tray of tequila glasses.

"You're a fucking moron, Roger," the Bolshie cap bellowed. "The NLF is the legitimate armed guerrilla force of the Vietnamese people in the south. I'm no fan of people waving the VietCong flag at demonstrations, but that's the proper flag for Vietnam's revolution."

"That's a nationalist rag, not a righteous working class banner, numbnuts," the Mao cap retorted in kind. "I'm surprised, truly shocked in fact Bill, that you can renege on your professed proletarian internationalist principles so easily and surrender to *bourgeois* nationalism."

Roger followed the Progressive Labor Party line on Vietnam, and Bill the Socialist Workers Party line. They had been good friends in 1965 when they'd both been affiliated with the US-Soviet Friendship Committee. Roger had been married to Susan, a social democrat, and Susan had an affair with Bill before coming out as lesbian. A fistfight followed, and acrimony persisted. Roger drifted into Maoism, Bill into Trotskyism. They were now bitter enemies, always attacking each other at meetings, denouncing each other to acquaintances, each fantasizing how to get even with the other. As I eased out the kitchen door before the shouting match came to blows, I realized I was learning a valuable political lesson:

### THE PERSONAL IS ALWAYS POLITICAL

The first outstanding example of personal enmity becoming political antagonism, indeed the archetype for this aphorism, was Trotsky versus Stalin. Both members of Lenin's Bolshevik party, they had an abiding personal dislike for each other, apparently due to personality differences. Trotsky considered Stalin lugubrious, provincial, crude, and plodding, while Stalin thought Trotsky arrogant, Westernized, bohemian, and elitist. With the death of Lenin, a power struggle erupted between the two within the party which took on ideological overtones. Trotsky opposed the bureaucratization of the Soviet state, promoted permanent revolution, and insisted on the rapid, forced industrialization of the country while Stalin was a master of bureaucratic manipulation, defended socialism in one country, and stood behind Lenin's mixed economic NEP program. Stalin outmaneuvered Trotsky for control of the party, expelled him from Russia, and eventually had Trotsky assassinated in Mexico.

On rarer occasions, honest political differences breed personal hostilities. We come to profound political conflicts often assuming that our opponents are detestable human beings when they're not much different from ourselves.

I threaded through the boisterous crowd in the combined dining and living rooms as Pete Seeger boomed over the stereo system. No bowler hat in sight, but I did notice a couple of sexagenarians I knew sharing beers on a couch nearby. Frank, an Industrial Workers of the World member from the 1920s, wore a blue striped railroad engineer's cap, and Farley, in the Socialist Labor Party since the 1930s, had on a modest tan cowboy hat. I heard snippets of their conversation—the Palmer Raids, the split between the IWW and the WIIU, the death of Haywood and De Leon—but I didn't stop to chat. Both organizations had been moribund by 1960, but were experiencing a revitalization thanks to the 60s youthful counterculture / New Left. I even had a little red IWW membership book at the time, more out of nostalgia then anything else. The IWW continued to experience membership and organizing ups and downs, whereas for the SLP the spike in activity was only temporary before it finally became a shell of its former self, bringing me to my second political metaphor of the evening:

### THE NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD

The Left is littered with zombie organizations which refuse to die. Occasionally, groups merge, and even more rarely, cease to exist altogether. But defunct political organizations, like the defunct political ideas that spawned them, tend to persist. Just as De Leonism and syndicalism can still be found somewhere, if only on life support, so can the various iterations of Trotskyism and Schactmanism, the numerous Maoist strains of the New Communist Movement, classical anarchism and left communism, *ad nauseam*. Well, many of them anyway. I mean, there are still beatniks, hippies, and goths around for fucks sake. It seems that once something arises, it keeps on trucking along until a wooden stake is forcefully driven through its heart to kill it off, and then not even.

As for Frank and Farley, while I subscribed to the New Age platitude that the elderly needed to be valued and their wisdom cherished, to be honest I had little time for historical sentimentality. I was part of the New Left, with an emphasis on the new. The future of politics belonged to us, the youth of 1970, and I certainly didn't anticipate getting old before we made The Revolution. So I averted my gaze and skirted their conversation, looking for my man.

I looked out over the backyard as people awkwardly tried to dance to Jimi Hendrix's "Machine Gun." Jake and Connie had arranged lit tiki torches around the yard's perimeter, so the grotesque shadows of partygoers contorted across the unkempt lawn. A gibbous moon silvered the night air. I returned to searching for my dealer, just not in the hosts' bedroom which had been commandeered by three couples intent on an impromptu free love orgy. The other bedroom had been converted into a combination trips / meditation / sewing room / office, which is where I finally found the man with the bowler hat holding court. With his English accent, coal-black eye shadow, and silver nobbed cane, Nigel anticipated the droogies of *Clockwork Orange* by a scant year.

"Spectacle, spectacle, all is spectacle," he patronizingly addressed my friend Thomas, a fellow anarchist who wore a dark gray whoopee cap like the cartoon character Jughead.

"Is smashing the state mere spectacle?" Thomas asked. "Is a spontaneous peoples revolution against the government so easily dismissed?

"Your sad sub-anarchism suffers from the mystics of nonorganization," Nigel said with a condescending smirk. "Its spontaneism denies the power of the revolutionary proletariat and plays into capitalism's rigged game. What is needed are moments of life concretely and deliberately constructed by the collective organization of a unitary ambiance and a game of events. What is needed is the revolution of everyday life."

Nigel talked a good Situationist game. With two slim, styling Carnaby Street girls fawning over him, I admitted he impressed me. Associated with King Mob and the Angry Brigade in England, he was an ambassador's son with diplomatic immunity, which was how he kept himself and his drug dealing business from getting busted. The raw noise of the MC5's "Kick Out The Jams" blasted

through the party as I shopped in Nigel's briefcase drugstore emporium, sampled some seed-heavy Columbian Gold, purchased an ounce, and rolled a couple of joints to share around. As I and everybody in the room got high, or higher, I still hadn't learned the lesson of:

**LOOKING FOR THE NEXT BIG THING**

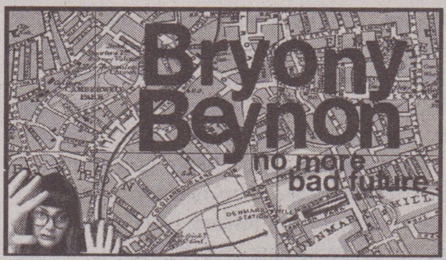
The Situationists were revolutionary raconteurs and carny hustlers, a theater troupe that held one successful Paris performance in May-June of 1968 but hadn't been active since. To me however, they were the next big thing. They certainly wowed impressionable young Leftists, anarchists in particular, with their panache and pizzazz. Situationist and post-Situ wannabes continue to proliferate to this day, but the real legacy of the Situationist International was a virulent sectarianism. Split after split reduced the SI to two remaining members by 1972, when the organization dissolved itself. I was impressed by the Situ-inspired Dutch Provos, but my real inspirations back in the day were the more wide-ranging, broadbased San Francisco Diggers and Dutch Kabouters. The search for the next big thing on the Left continues to the present, with insurrectionary anarchists and communizing ultraleftists still playing that game.

I was tripping when my Ventura friends collected me for the ride home. An owl swooped down silently to snag a mouse in the front yard as we climbed into a brightly painted VW minibus, its owner and driver none to sober herself. Me, I wore a soft gray British flat workers cloth cap, a newsboy cap with a snap button brim. As we meandered along Highway 33—soon to be immortalized in the godawful song "Ventura Highway" by the schlocky soft rock band America—I dreamed about becoming a political columnist for a famous future rocknroll magazine in an as yet unborn youth counterculture. Naw, that can't happen I thought, and fell asleep.

**DISCLAIMER:** *This is a piece of fiction. Names, characters, organizations, places, events and incidents are either the products of the author's imagination or used in a fictitious manner. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events is purely coincidental.*

**PERSONAL PROPAGANDA**

*Find my books and writings here:*
*Personal blog: gamatiasz.wordpress.com*
*Political blog: leftyhooligan.wordpress.com*
*Facebook page: facebook.com/georgematiasz*
*Writer: facebook.com/gamatiasz*
*Publishing: facebook.com/62MilePress*
*Publishing website: 62milepress.com*




It's hard to get a hold on this slippery world, slick as it is with vacant pre-cum and enemy spit. It's hard to keep enough air inside me to stay upright. They used to talk about making history, then they talked about the end of history, now the ruptures we quietly praying for are near but it's not like we planned, that's not what we meant. History is coming. An ill-advised quest for understanding this mess leaves me thigh-deep in the filth, juggling analyses, finding no satisfaction beyond maybe a sharper eye for bad signs, which is no comfort at all. It is, I have heard, good to read more but this dawning realisation is not the education I was hoping for. If you need the exact circumference of this deep dark hole, I can oblige. A race to the bottom of the "takes" economy puts the whack job interpretations on display, ranked in order of ridicule. Woman cannot live on black humour alone, and there is no way to know if these maniacs represent exception or rule, if this is performance or conviction, if this is the mask, or the face under it. A key indicator of trauma impacts is a diminished interest in things you once enjoyed. Nails grow out from our hands and feet. They'd advance into a nice full body shell if only we'd stop biting them.

I have found that my innate desire to keep tabs on the tide of the new with regards to punk has weakened. I suddenly understand how people start to itemie their glory days instead of seeing them just over the horizon. She's only thirty-one! Yes pal, age is but a number, but aging is but the slow process of dying in which I have always felt the sense of having a head start. I think as you get older you tend to reflect on how things can change, even in our own tiny world, from year to year, and I think that keeping an eye on that can teach us important lessons. When you're part of a community which, regardless of what anyone else says, has established social norms, you can, often by sheer force of will, and not often without some backlash, change at the very least their paint job, if not the very foundations. It's important not to forget that. What's even more noticeable is that once those norms change, people are often very reticent to acknowledge this as progress. It's as if naming the gains that have been made would somehow cause them to crumble to dust. As if nostalgia is our only currency. As if it's safer to just pretend that the natural arc of things is that they just get better, that all this was both effortless and inevitable. Bullshit. The pendulum swings, as many know. We need to resist the urge to just ride the waves and instead be militant about reflecting as a general rule for all of radical life, even if its seems like navel gazing. (Hi.)

Here is a story I have probably told before. I did not play in a band until I was twenty-one years old. This was more than seven years since I'd begun to define myself entirely through music. That's a long time to feel like a fraudulent half-a-participant, especially as a teenager. It's also a long time to internalize that you're not enough. You see, I was hearing voices. The voices of people who thought they knew my place. I can taste the weight of the air after I deigned, in the back of a car, when I was sixteen, to half-joke that maybe I could be in this new band being formed in my presence. Silence suddenly cracked into unstoppable laughter like I'd offered to fly us to the moon. I treaded carefully so as never to face the same humiliation. These words echoed around my peripheral vision like a traffic light that you know to obey before you've even really looked at it. They words formed a sort of naysayer chorus in the back of my mind, half their words half mine. You can't. You'll be a joke. You have bad coordination, guitar is too hard, you're too fat to perform, you won't have anything to say. Others were direct quotes: "Girls voices don't suit hardcore," "Girls can't drum, 'girlbeat' sucks," "Girls just look terrible on stage it's so awkward" and on and on and on. This shit was in the air and it certainly wasn't being challenged. Maybe this is still happening for some people, but the shadows and the alienation are much less brutal for today's baby punks, I have to hope. I made a rolling vow during those years to do my bit to make this type of shit less likely, once I felt like I could justify my own attempts. I just didn't know how, quite yet.

And then, finally, something came together and I was asked to be in a band. And I said no. Over and over. Because it was terrifying. But the inexorable pull and the persistence of other women registered on a different frequency, and I finally gave in. My first band was called Back Stabbath, a hastily assembled all-woman powerviolence style band that played four gigs over three weeks in 2007, bizarrely crossing the gamut of support slots for both 108 and Whitehouse. There is a reason for this incongruous set-up. Back Stabbath consisted of me, who was mostly into chuggy hardcore and expensive streetwear t-shirts at that precise moment, my dear friend Maya, who was making experimental noise music that I was too much of a philistine to understand whilst roaming the lanes of Brighton in Victorian

nightdresses, plus a bombastic rainbow-mohawked street punk from Berkshire called Christina. Then there as Meeso, an Australian crust gal in town for a while, who I just assumed was the seasoned pro amongst us, so wrapped up was I in my own neuroses. Meeso had her own struggles, which are not mine to write about here, but I had hoped I might catch up with her now living down here. Sadly she passed away a few months ago. I would learn that it had been her first band too, just like me, and she had said to many people how her life had been forever changed by the experience too. RIP Meeso. Like a DIY version of the Spice Girls, we stepped up and played through our sub-ten minute sets. The spell had been broken. I was hyper-critical of myself and was still under the influence of the cock's chorus, whose increasing desperate response had shifted from an undertone of "no one will like you because you are all women" to "people are just patronising you by applauding because you are all women." I understood, at that point, that this wasn't about me, it was about what others have to lose by seeing us do our damn thing.

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A few years later I'd moved to London, and had started putting on gigs in squats and social centres with deliberately mixed bills under the banner of "Big Takeover." I felt emboldened to make a mark on a city where at that point, the primary venue for punk gigs was a pub owned by Vice Media. Again, this fact is lost to the vagueries of recent history but it was depressing as hell. It's also hard to explain how few women there were playing in DIY bands in the whole of the UK at this moment, let alone openly queer, trans, or gender non-conforming people. We are talking single figures for the entire *country*. The environment at gigs backed this up, as did my experiences then singing in a band with three men. They were dear friends and certainly not hostile, but the subject of gendered difference was an awkward side note that I realised was not a fruitful topic to bring up. While singing in this band I was constantly met with disbelief, incorrect assumptions and the unwelcome hands of "punks" who felt my body was fair game both on and off stage. I threw myself into putting together line-ups that would bring together spikey punks, clean-cut hardcore kids freaking out about health and safety, residual emos'n'screamos, that breed evergreen crusties who (much to their chagrin) would probably survive a nuclear holocaust, sundry bike punks who love any excuse to bring their bikes to a crowded place, and even some tie-wearing garage rockaz. The novelty of the spaces was unifying, somehow. We had some wild nights in not always totally legal buildings. Everyone always said how free they felt. I always considered and fought hard to resist just hosting predominantly single gender line-ups, but too often ended up capitulating just because there were not the bands in existence to ask to play. The negative feedback loop had had its way. Let it serve as a barometer that this was less than ten years ago! DIY music scenes were just not having the broad, public conversations about representation that we now do, and it had resulted in an almost entirely homogenous set of bands to pull from. I felt conflicted, wanting to keep the standards up and resistant to booking some really terrible punk-adjacent group that happened to have a woman bassist either (although more power to her always) because it felt like that would just allow idiots to confirm the myths surrounding women as "less than." I hated this. I wanted to see a groundswell of new bands but I had no idea how to bring this about, and furthermore had, I believed, zero musical skills to impart on a peer-to-peer basis. I could start, I figured, by facing down my own fear-demons first and finally picking up a guitar to reduce the overall sense of impotence. In the middle of winter, Louis all-but-barricaded me into the garage until I could play a riff he'd tactfully adapted for me which approximated a stripped-back-to-two-notes version of "Life of Crime" by The Weirdos. The naysayer chorus didn't go away, of course, it just got drowned out by atonal feedback as we held a warped mirror to pouting bearded faces and bulging side-eyes.

To be continued.

Let me make one thing clear: I love living in San Francisco. The people, the beaches, the scenery, the food, and the culture are all top-notch. If you can't have fun in this town, no matter what your budget, you're doing something seriously wrong. That being said the scene as it stands right now offers me limited opportunities to enjoy the kind of punk that really floats my boat these days. That's why I am so eternally grateful to the organizers of the Manic Relapse fest. They bring in loads of bands from all over the world and run an incredibly tight ship in terms of keeping things moving and making sure everything goes off without a hitch. Every year it's an incredible undertaking and no matter what you happen to be into there is almost certainly going to be a band you already love on the bill and another that you've never heard of that completely blows you away.

I joked previous to the fest that this was the MEANWHILE show, and holy shit did they claim that title, especially with their headlining performance at the Oakland Metro. Buoyed by an ecstatic crowd, they blew through an incredible set of the purest, high-test D-beat possible, including several DISCHANGE classics and an anthemic performance of "Same Shit New Millennium" that tore the house down. MEANWHILE are a band that are almost universally respected, but rarely seem to be lavished with all the praise they deserve. These guys have been carrying the D-beat standard for nearly 30 years, through trend after trend, never releasing a bad record or even a mediocre one. They're legends, and it was an honor to take in their performance.

Of course, there were other bands that made waves as well. Italy's KONTATTO primed the pump for MEANWHILE with a fantastic set of melodic crust that might have sounded hackneyed ten years ago but was a breath of fresh air in 2017. They've been around since the days when "stadium crust" was a trend that couldn't die soon enough, but they were one of the best bands in the style then and now they're even better and they benefit from having many fewer peers in the genre. Colombia's LUPUS were the unknown surprise to me, with an incredibly charismatic singer (indeed, charismatic singers were something of a theme throughout the fest) and a minimal but high-energy MISFITS-influenced attack that had the punks stirred into a frenzy. Japan's SYSTEM FUCKER were an unsurprising highlight, offering up a nonstop set of traditional Japanese hardcore with stage dives galore and the requisite blazing guitar work. Singer Yu-Ta worked the crowd nonstop, somehow performing the Chuck D and Flavor Flav roles simultaneously. SYSTEM FUCKER have yet to write their magnum opus recording-wise in their new incarnation, but as a live entity they're nearly untouchable. PISSCHRIST, the mad Aussies, made their triumphant return to the Bay Area nearly ten years after their last performance (I know because I still have the delightfully obscene '07 tour shirt) and were just as loud, tight and entertaining as they were a decade ago. Yeap, of course, qualifies as yet another charismatic singer. So does the front man of CINDERBLOCK, whose Metro set of hardcore-tinged Oi! was less chaotic

than last year's outdoor demolition derby, but definitely more musically memorable. Once again, a raucous crowd response definitely improved the set, with endless sing-a-longs all but replacing the band's backing vocals. Baltimore's HUMANMANIA offered up an excellent set of hypnotic noize punk, combining mid-tempo rhythms and swirling guitar noise to create a novel take on the style. Last (but hardly least), Mexico's CRIMEN were definitely in the running for best all-around band of the fest, with an incredibly seamless performance of their amazing songs. Perhaps the fact that they have not one but two charismatic vocalists improved their place in the Manic Relapse standings but goddamn they were fantastic, almost certainly second only to MEANWHILE in terms of best performance of the weekend. Once again, it was a fantastic event to attend and I left with ringing ears, an empty wallet and a burning desire to buy tickets for next year's fest.

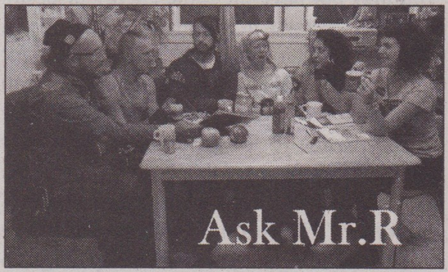
The top piece of merch to pick up at this year's Manic Relapse was SYSTEM FUCKER's *West Coast Tour 2017* tape, four brand new tracks on the always-reliable Strong Mind Japan label offered up in an extremely well-designed reversible j-card numbered out of 200. These build on the LP material, demonstrating a much stronger approach to their '90s Japanese hardcore attack. "Go Fuck Yourself" is the strongest of the bunch, a punchy short-lived ripper with a super-catchy central riff and aggro vocal. "Great Escape" has a bit of a Brit-core-meets-ANTI-CIMEX vibe, with a nice ascending riff and touches of crust in the structure and bridges. This is a smart release, much cheaper than a new EP and as the tape promises a second album "coming soon" one would imagine that some if not all of these songs will appear on it. Call it a teaser, and given that only one of the four tracks ("No More War") is less than memorable I'm definitely looking forward to the new material.

Coming to us from Japan via Russia's No Name cassette label, INMOH's demo is a promising lo-fi slice of '80s-style Japanese hardcore à la DISARRAY or NAPALM. The recording sounds like a live in the studio deal, raw and pissed with no obvious overdubs. I can't even read the name of track number three on the smudgy insert but it's a fucking monster, total metallic '80s JHC heaven with a super-catchy chorus and razor-sharp riff. Except the slight pixilation and label info, everything about this cassette could be mistaken for a lost gem, I can't wait to hear more from this band. Killer graphic design, killer songs, excellent demo-quality sound. Allegedly this is limited to 60 copies, I'm not sure if that's the case but y'all need to keep an eye out for this beast because it's easily one of the best demos I've heard this year.

Confession time: I purchased ENZYME's demo and didn't write about it in this column because I thought it was just kind of okay, not really something I'd want or need to highlight in the month's releases. Well fuck, the new *Abuse of Power* EP on Crust War / Hardcore Victim is worlds and worlds better than the demo material. It might as well be a different fuckin' band! This is masterful bass-driven hardcore that touches on noize core but doesn't exactly belong to the genre, similar to Portland's FRENZY. Lots of phaser on the guitar, super-pissed vocals, heavy-handed drumming, and goddamn! That bass! The tone is perfect and the bass lines are expertly written. From the frenetic attack of "Self Lobotomy" to the CHAOS UK-esque crawl of "Hollow," the bass leads the band to glory. For the first time maybe ever I will recommend that you skip the demo and go straight to grabbing the first EP.

If there's one band I wish could have made it to the Manic Relapse festivities, it's Portland's RUBBLE. Alongside PMS 84 (and following in the footsteps of BOG PEOPLE) they're bringing UK82 back with catchy, pogo-able tunes while throwing in a few unique touches as well on this new EP via Distort Reality. RUBBLE in particular owe a heavy debt to ACTION PACT, the PARTISAN, and the ENEMY, with a bit of the mid '80s rock that influenced so many of the '82 bands slipping in to "USA" and "Gaslighting." The advantage they have over those '80s bands is that RUBBLE are able to reap the benefits of hindsight, joining the melodic elements of that style to punk aggression, as "Gaslighting" highlights in particular with its aggressive backing vocal and riff playing off the melodic vocal line. It seems that RUBBLE are rehabilitating the style of the later works of the more melodic UK82 bands in the same way that THISCLOSE are tackling later DISCHARGE, and it's working very well for them.

Finally, let's go back one more time to the reissue well à la last month's column, with the new NEGAZIONE *1983 Pre-early Days* LP. I'm sure I've related the story before, but lucking into a copy of the NEGAZIONE / DECLINO split LP back in the early '90s changed the way I experienced punk forever. It was one of the first non-American hardcore records I ever heard and it was fucking overwhelming (of course!). Needless to say, I've had a huge interest in the early NEGAZIONE material ever since, so this LP is exactly what I'm into. Zazzo is the fucking man, the Italian hardcore equivalent to Sakevi, Joey Shithead, or Ian MacKaye, an unmistakable voice fronting an incredibly influential band. Indeed, NEGAZIONE are probably best compared to MINOR THREAT in terms of their instrumental talent and influence on their native scene. This LP compiles their earliest studio recordings, which appeared on the *L'incubo Continua* compilation tape and selections from two live performances in 1983. All of the recordings are loving remasters of very lo-fi source material, but the spirit and aggression shines through beautifully. To be perfectly honest, the B-side material (from a January 10, 1983 performance) is a bit lo-fi even for me, very echo-y and almost bass-free, but it's still listenable even if only to hear some of the classic songs in their embryonic form. The compilation material and live stuff on the A-side sound fucking great and more than justify the purchase price of the LP, which also features excellent design and a slick fold-out insert with early graphics and lyrics. I wouldn't mind copping a t-shirt of the barbed-wire / building motif on the back cover and insert, that's for sure! It's a shame that the only recent reissue of NEGAZIONE is that huge box set that includes all their lame crossover material as well, it would be great if everything up to the first LP was available à la carte. Maybe someday, but until then you need to cop this LP for sure.




*I don't think anyone should take advice, but there are probably a lot of things for the punks to talk about, and we might as well do it here. Think of it more as an opinion column though. (And if we need a tagline for that I hope it can be something as vague as: "A column for people who are intrigued by subtle differences between the 'punks' and the 'punx.'")*

**Dear Mr. R,**

**I, not unlike many others in my community, experienced a personal tragedy this year. Since then I have been not feeling like going to shows as much. I don't feel like I have as much to offer the punk community and talking to new people and feeling like I have to explain the emotional baggage I am carrying around in order to justify the fact that I used to be smarter or funnier is really hard. What can I do?**

There is no way people are going to believe that I didn't write this question to myself! I

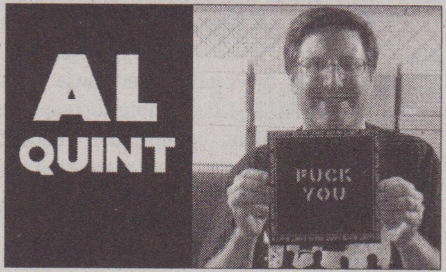
honestly didn't, but damn, variations on this topic have been coming up both mentally and in conversation for me so frequently that I guess I simultaneously feel like the most and least qualified person to speak on the subject. At least maybe now I have a place I can stick all of this information?

One thing I have found through all of this mess is that something frequently standing in the way of using our coping and moving on skills, and leading us deeper into that obsession with searching for justifications is our inability to acknowledge ourselves as changed people. Like, we keep waiting for things to "go back to normal," and when they don't we blame ourselves for not *trying hard enough* or any other number of reasons we're still *not better* yet. But honestly, things are probably just really different for you now mentally than they used to be, and that's okay. That's what human growth is like, and tragedy and trauma are things that have the tendency to change us in ways we could never have imagined previously. And you're clearly not *actually* any less smart or funny as you ever were, but your focus and priorities may be different.

Shows and friendships may have played different roles in your life than they do now. You may not have the same energy or desire to prove yourself in social situations as you did before, which can feel really guilty for no fucking reason. Especially when you are the type of person who has traditionally tried to be the rock / giver / listener in your group of friends. So if this is you, just for the record: *The opposite of a "caretaker" is NOT a "burden".* The truth is that you don't have to be interesting or smart or funny to go to shows if you want to show up and be around people, and you don't actually even have to go to shows at all if you don't feel like it, because, obviously and firstly, punk is not a job, but also because the punk community is not something that is solely run and benefitted by show attendance or ability to be smart and funny on cue.

If you don't feel equipped to function in your previous chosen role in punk but are still looking for other ways to benefit and stay connected to your scene, as well as to yourself, there are other things you can do / learn / try. Collaboration can feel way better than socializing for instance, and there are some obvious punk standard fallbacks or a million other things that might seem like good places to start putting new weird energy other than standing in a crowd: playing in bands, making zines, writing a book, drawing comics, recording music, activism, art, screenprinting, benefits, outreach, traveling to other towns / scenes, telling people that are depressed that they're not alone, remembering to send a card, volunteering for something, filming movies, learning how to build something, being vulnerable while you learn this is all a facade with no perfect answers, seeing something that needs to be generally improved and trying to be the one who improves it, etc. Pretty much anything is a good thing to try out now that you have all this time in your head to figure out who you are becoming. Not a damn thing in your life has to involve people while you're working through these things, and you especially don't have to try to push yourself into situations that make you feel guilty about feeling how you feel. Just let yourself be a different growing human in whatever way that you can right now, and let the time pass until you're able to breathe again.

*Travis Igler, of Sterile Mind fame, wild art genius, liker of dogs, and general good guy, made a perfect and hilarious flyer / poster for this column. I really hope you end up with one. Let me know if you want one sent your way, whether under the guise of passing them out in your town or not. Send a text / phone call to 510-585-HELP with all your questions, opinions, tips, and whatever else to be answered within the pages of* Maximum Rocknroll. *Very exciting. Send in email form to askmrr@mail.com*




**ONLY IN AMERICA**

*"…that I'm proud to be an American where at least I know I'm free*
*And I won't forget the men who died who gave that right to me*
*And I gladly stand up next to you and defend her still today*
*'Cause there ain't no doubt I love this land God bless the U…*

SHUT THE FUCK UP! FOR THE LOVE OF GOD, JUST SHUT THE FUCK UP, ALREADY! That's what I want to say every time I hear that wretched song, which is "God Bless The USA," one of the worst ever written. It's by Lee Greenwood and the de facto national anthem of the Christian right. Of course, Lee, being the typical right-wing chicken hawk that he is, never did stand up next to anyone or defend *anything*. Well, maybe his bank account—I'm sure there are plenty of rubes still forking over money for that song. I even own a copy of it—well, a cover version by Robbie Hiner, who used to sing on Jerry Falwell's "Old Time Gospel Hour." I used to always call in or write away for the various items they'd give away. I can't find my multi-cassette set of the Gospels but I still have that 7". It's on the Jubal 2000 label ("A commitment to *godly* excellence") and it's backed with "America, You're Too Young To Die," written by Gary Paxson, who originally produced Halloween perennial "Monster Mash" before finding God. I imagine he eventually repented for doing that since, as we all know, Halloween is an anti-Christian, Satanic holiday.

That Hiner 7" is just a few records down from the GUESS WHO'S "American Woman." I did get a good laugh when I was watching a baseball game on July 4 around ten years ago and, when they'd go to break, they'd play various songs with America in the title, including that one. I wonder if they paid attention to the lyrics, which were hardly pro-American. The GUESS WHO were from Canada and the American woman is the Statue of Liberty—one of the lines is, *"we don't need your war machines / we don't need your ghetto scenes / colored lights can hypnotize / sparkle someone else's eyes."* This was a number one hit for three weeks in May, 1970. I still love that song. I'd like to think maybe playing that during the game was a bit of subversion on the part of the producer, although I doubt that was the case.

Oh yeah, since this is the July issue, Happy July 4th! I actually don't mind this day because it's right around Ellen's birthday and we usually have a nice family BBQ and enjoy the warm weather that seems to last around three weeks for the whole year. It's not because of any sense of patriotism. Fuck that shit. I usually start my radio show that week with a snippet from "GBTUSA," before blowing it up and segueing into such all-American classics as "Land Of The Free" by BROTHER INFERIOR (now *that* song is a fucking anthem!) or "God Bless America" by TOXIC REASONS, which concludes with the line *"land of the free, home of the slaves."* Whenever I hear the national anthem (which I refuse to stand for) at a ballgame I also sing that line when it concludes. Land of the slaves, indeed—or should I say immigrants? After all, that's what Health and Human Services Secretary Ben Carson recently said the slaves were—albeit "involuntary" immigrants. Slaves then, slaves now—especially members of the middle and working classes, some of whom voted for you-know-who, even though it will directly hurt them economically.

I really love doing what I call my "Salute

To America" radio show every year—it gives me the opportunity to dig out a lot of Reagan-era punk songs (and ones of more recent vintage) that express disgust at this country. ARTICLES OF FAITH were (and still are) an important band for me and I still yell along when Vic Bondi sings, *"I've had enough of American dreams!!"* I always loved that band—"I Got Mine" spoke perfectly to the selfish social Darwinism behind the supply side snake oil that's been peddled for decades and it's sad to think there are still morons who believe in that. There's also "In Your Suit," with its critique of corporate and political corruption and conformity. Songs like these were definitely a balm as I wondered what the fuck I was doing working in a bank and what the fuck I was doing with my life—of course, I'm still trying to figure that out!

Speaking of pledges and anthems, CRUCIFUCKS's "Democracy Spawns Bad Taste" begins with *"You stand for the anthem at the old ball game and your Pledge of Allegiance is so fucking lame,* with the rejoinder *"Be a good American… FUCK OFF!"* I'll admit there's a certain amount of enjoyably mindless catharsis when it comes to that song, as well as songs like 7 SECONDS's "Fuck Your Amerika" (from the *Not So Quite On The Western Front* compilation) or late '90s / early '00s Boston band MELEE's "Fuck You The Red White and Blue." "In A Free Land" by HÜSKER DÜ is another perennial…so fucking catchy, with Bob Mould howling out lines line *"Saturation of stars and stripes / the only freedom worth fighting for is what you think"* interspersed with Grant Hart's *"don't mean thing."* I love the way the title of SCREAM's "U. Suck. A." rolls off the tongue.

Some bands critiques were a little more nuanced or not as angry sounding, such as NAKED RAYGUN's "Home Of The Brave," which references the persecution of the WEAVERS, the folk group started by the legendary Pete Seeger. They were blacklisted during the McCarthy era. NAKED RAYGUN also had the sarcastic, ironic "Only In America," which sounds like a lighthearted romp. Not necessarily anti-American, just observational. The FREEZE's "American Town" is a personalized take on escaping this country's dead-end conformity—doing what's expected. DILLINGER FOUR's "The Great American Going Out Of Business Sale" nearly brings tears to my eyes, especially at the end where Paddy exclaims he's had *"enough of all shit about "making do," "playing ball," "the way things are," and "dealing with it,"* and it's set to a surging pop / punk melody, not angry hardcore,

That's the thing… I'm feeling a lot angrier and really *do* need to not let all the madness consume me but it ain't easy. The songs I've listed above may not change the world (sad to say), but can perhaps lift one's spirits by knowing that you're not alone in feeling enraged and disillusioned.

**MUSIC TO PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO**

Time to catch up on some demo tapes. The best one I've heard lately is from SIAL, hailing from Singapore. A buzzsaw fury, both at a fast'n'ripping clip and songs that have more of a pounding, tribal feel. Guitar and bass riffs that are thick as molasses and Siti's piercing, urgent sounding vocals with a bit of echo on them that bring to mind Spanish bands like DESTINO FINAL or UNA BÈSTIA INCONTROLABLÉ. It's a big, sense-enveloping sound. (Lost In Fog, lostinfog.bandcamp.com)

LA band DIRTY & HIS FISTS released a new four song demo for their 2017 east coast tour a few months back. Dishing out some high-energy punk rock'n'roll at a sturdy mid-tempo clip. Thick riffs chock full of buzz and burn. "23rd Century" adds some spacey guitar effects to the fray. It's not wild or out of control but their volume-driven, not too slick-sounding attack does connect. (shoutrecordings@gmail.com)

CROSS CLASS are a band from Sacramento featuring Craig from RAD. They've released a six-song demo, "Reflection," that's taken from a future fourteen-track release. Raw, fast, hardcore punk with the occasional blastbeat and also incorporating some floor-pounding properties. Only one song, the heavier-sounding title track, breaks the one-minute barrier. Angry-as-hell sounding but a little kind of goes a long way. (craighancock2011@gmail.com)

Portland's INTERCISION's *Their Names* tape has a fold out insert that says "No Ban / No Wall / No Registry / No Trump…Fuck White Supremacy." Thing is this tape could have come out at any time—timeless lyrics about misogyny, religion, police abuse, as well as a poignant letter to a childhood friend who got killed in one of this country's endless wars. Those words and some of the other lyrics read more like prose or essays than rhyming lines. The demo's title track reads off the names of people murdered by the police in recent years. Unfortunately, some more names will have to be added soon. Full-on, power-packed hardcore punk—reminds me of AUS-ROTTEN a bit. Includes a PIST cover. (intercision.bandcamp.com)

Boston band SILVER SCREAMS *Defective Machines* 12" mixes up hard-driving, rockin' melodic punk. At its best when they plow straight ahead with a volume-soaked attack, as with "Dead Air" and "Brownbagger," both connecting with a feisty west coast punk fervor, packing some scorching guitar riffs. The cover of JOY DIVISION's "Disorder" is well-executed, if fairly faithful. The only real misfire is the more down-tempo, slower-burning "Straightjacket." (silverscreams.bandcamp.com)

Scotty from Tankcrimes Records sent me a generous package of his latest releases. CLITERATI is a new band for former VOETSEK vocalist Ami Lawless, who relocated to Portland awhile back. While there are a few grindcore moves here and there, CLITERATI favor a crustier hardcore / thrash attack than Ami's former band—bruising riffs, propulsive drumming and Ami's vocals barking out the harsh sentiments. The song was written before the election but "Make America Hate Again" could be a mantra for the new dark age. "Virtue" takes on sexuality—the hypocrisies for people who pledge purity but their actions and fantasies are anything but—*"preach purity while practicing perversions."* Powerful, both musically and lyrically.

FUCK YOU PAY ME's third album, *Dumbed Down* has been in the can for a couple of years and is just now seeing the light of the day. About time because it's their most kickass effort to date. A detonation of rampaging Clevo hardcore that's raw, fast and relentless and goddamn does Erba sound pissed off. As he says on "Douche Chills," *"Everyone around me puts me in a rage."* You do reach a point in your life where there's no tolerance for people with hipper-than-thou obnoxious attitudes, to say nothing of shitty work situations or garden-variety.knuckledraggers. That latter is the topic of "Ammosexual," railing at Fox News-loving gun fondlers, while "50 Dudes With Machetes" is pulled from the Cleveland news headlines after some tough-guy gang-banger violence at a hardcore fest there. "Steubenville City Limits" is about college football playing rapists getting protected. And all of this is from 2015. I can only imagine what the next installment could be like—and I hope there is one because we need this kind of punk rock scream therapy. It could make this album sound like soft-rock.

I'm not quite as enamored with CONNOISSEUR's *Over The Edge*. Stoner music i.e. every song is about the joys of smoking weed and, while it's done with a knowing wink and sense of wit, it's kind of a one-trick pony. Musically, it's not your typical stoner metal. It's a heavy sound with both high-pitched and cookie monster-timbre vocal tradeoffs, but they also have an ugly punk edge to go along with the metallic elements. I'm actually kind of surprised the vinyl color was pink and not green—the price of the digital download is $4.20 (natch). Maybe if I was high… who knows? (tankcrimes.com)

NURSE's second self-titled 7" is just as

intense as their first. Nasty, scalding hardcore punk but there's also haunting guitar textures to go with the onslaught. These guys actually sound like OUT COLD with darker musical shadings, especially on opening song "Foreign Objects." Also, like that band, the lyrics reveal a tortured, tormented soul. Ear-rending sounds. (Scavenger Of Death, scavengerofdeath.storenvy.com)

MIRROR is an Austin aggregation including members of such heavy hitters as VAASKA, CRIATURAS, GLUE, and others. Needless to say, their *Universal Dismay* 7" provides a reckless excursion with spacey guitar tones to go with the noisy roar and ranty vocals. Kind of a Finnish hardcore feel at times, particularly KAAOS. Six songs of sonic dynamite. (Erst Theke Tonträger, ersttheke.de)

Finally, it probably wouldn't come as a surprise to anyone that SLIMY MEMBER, who take their name from a RUDIMENTARY PENI song, would draw at least some inspiration from that band. Their debut album *Ugly Songs For Ugly People* isn't a complete tribute but the latter's influence can certainly be heard on songs like "Revelations" and "Age Old Time." Still, it's the not the whole story. This Dallas band emphasize a goth-tinged ambiance with shimmery and slashing guitar layered over nimble, somber bass-lines and a solid rhythmic kick. The pace is picked up for the fast and furious "No God" and "Destroy and Resist." While there's a bleakness, it's not really dark wave—there aren't any keyboards. Slimy Member definitely come down on the punk side of the equation. (Drunken Sailor, drunkensailorrecords.com.uk)

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*This is part two of two:* I got a message from *Hausfrau* record store in Cleveland.

Steve Peffer asked if VANILLA POPPERS would want to play the Cleveland 9 SHOCKS TERROR show mid-May (two weeks before Horrible Fest). I know when it comes down to it, it's just a guy asking if we want to play his band's show, but on a bunch of other levels it totally blew my world apart. I look at other people getting involved in the punk scene by way of playing in a bunch of bands, creating art, doing labels and whatever else. They work hard, have a good time, and are successful in their own ways. I know I'm not the most articulate person so will try go about this without entering into a long-winded rant, but punk as a passion and a lifestyle for me always seemed like such a fight, partially due to my gender and my cultural upbringing in Australia. I'm now realizing it's also in part to an introvert personality and mental illness. Obviously I'm talking about my own experiences and not trying to dismiss anyone else's efforts or struggle who identify as part of a minority while being involved in the punk scene, or their own personal struggles or mental disorders. But from these constant walls I try to climb to live my life and move forward with work, punk projects, better standard of living, trying to gain a better sense of self-worth etc, I'm constantly second guessing what's real and what my mind tricks me into thinking is real. In a way, talking about it is a step forward in moving on dealing with it but at the same time I feel like I'm dwelling in a victim mentality if I do, so will wrap it up here. Getting asked to play a show with 9 SHOCKS TERROR was a big deal to me because in a way it validated that I wasn't a total failure and working on all the punk stuff I like to do wasn't totally in vain.

A brief background for those unfamiliar with 9 SHOCKS. Named after one of the LIP CREAM LPs (at least I assume so, I'm not sure where else it could have come from) they were an extension of H-100's when in the mid '90s, the frontman for that band dipped out and the band stayed together with the addition of a new singer to become 9ST, in a nutshell. They were active for about 10 years, folding in 2006, which was a few years into what I'm going to call the Alessandro / The Anus decade of Cleveland punk, roughly between 2003—2013, give or take. It kind of seems like this time is a crossover period of older bands fading out or going on to start goofier and weirder punk bands—thanks to the The Anus amongst a bunch of other reasons—as opposed to the fast and angsty hardcore they'd previously destroyed themselves with, although a handful of those bands were still around playing shows occasionally. In this was a new generation of kids finding their feet in the wreckage of the past twenty years of Cleveland hardcore. They would soon grow and begin taking control of the punk scene as they started bands, booked shows for locals and touring bands, worked at venues that incorporated the punk scene, assisted organizing punk fests to attract interstate punks and bands and generally trying to make the punk scene a safe space and community in what is ultimately a pretty sketchy city. This growth attracted more younger people, more bands and shows and so slowly started becoming it's own being and carrying on the torch of great Cleveland punk music, that realistically we can trace back to the '70s at least.

It's the start of 2017. Richard from *Saucepan Records* wrote a Cleveland Scene Report on the contemporary punk scene for *Maximum Rocknroll*. It came in the mail during my week (talked about in part one of this column) in Cleveland, and looking at it I didn't want to admit I was a bit disappointed. There's one page of writing and a page of photos and flyers. The Cleveland punk scene is so awesome right now and I felt that Richard had hardly done it any justice. He'd skimmed over some bands, venues, record shops and artists and then it was over. He acknowledges a new punk scene emerging in the last five years, it's small—"quality over quantity"—and if any interstate bands tour through, they'll definitely work hard to show them a good time. But there's no timeline for these new bands, where did they come from? What else do members of the bands do, what venues have closed and opened, what other artists are there, who takes photos, houses bands, does flyers…I don't know. I know my view of Cleveland is skewed because I was temporarily adopted by the scene when I lived there and haven't had to deal with it my whole life. I love my friends there and the punk music and the different weird people in the small community that make it what it is—I write about it all the time. But for Richard, it's like he loves Cleveland and wants people to know it's worth acknowledging, but at the same time is too burnt out to have to try and convince people to give this new scene a chance.

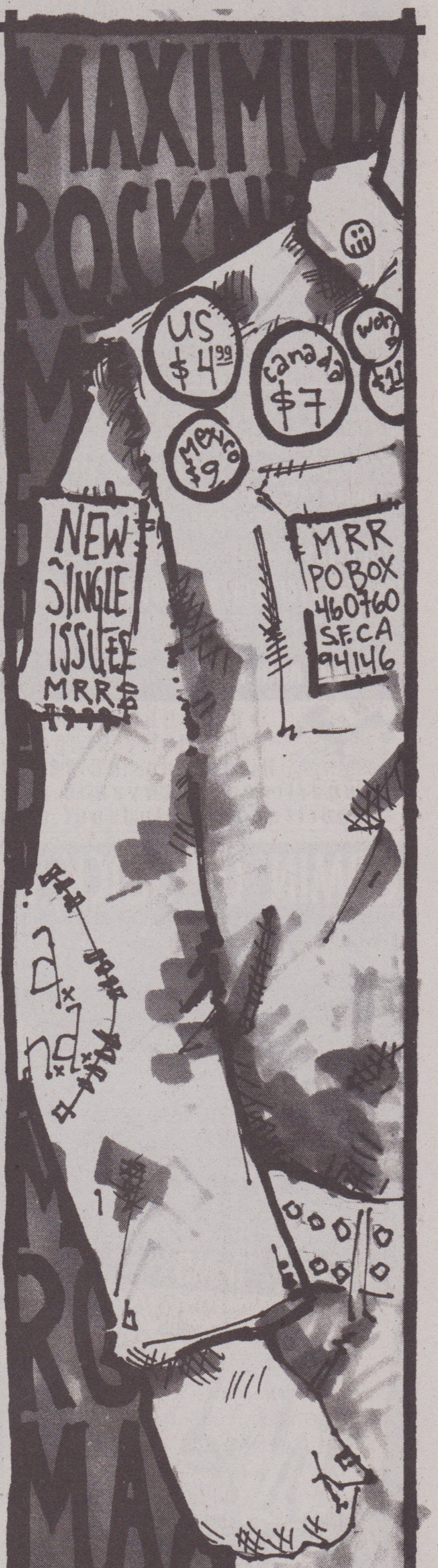
Richard (and partner Lia) has worked hard in the punk scene for the past ten-plus years. As well as battling to be creative in this way, people that want to be productive in punk usually find themselves putting on shows people don't come out to or working with bands that won't even help themselves. They find themselves having to mother a whole bunch of people that refuse to pay for shows, come to party and leave the place a mess and then they're the ones that complain that the punk scene is going to shit. You know what I'm talking about. Maybe you're one of them. And don't pull that "It's punk to sneak into shows etc" bullshit on me, like you have no money for the show but you're carrying a six-pack in that transparent plastic bag. Sometimes you just get burnt out when you feel like you're still the broke sucker trying to keep everything together and everyone that's not trying or doesn't care as much just seems to be better off somehow.

I started going to Cleveland about six years ago now and things have changed a lot and in a lot of ways for the better, but for sure it's been a hard fight that hasn't involved me. It's interesting to look at this scene and how supportive they are (or at least try to be) of minorities and having a safe community, even this is only thanks to the few people that continuously fight to protect it's members by speaking up and calling out misogynists, creating a safe space for the LGBTQ underground music community and making people aware of the language they use amongst other little measures (shows to fundraise for different charities etc). I can honestly say I was never aware of how important the words we use are until I left Australia where certain words and phrases are engrained in our dialect to the point that seemingly they don't mean anything but really, it's unbelievably damaging. Words like "c*nt" in Australia seem to be thrown around just as loosely as the old school generation of Cleveland hardcore scene would throw around words like "gay" or "f*ggot." The Cleveland scene isn't made up of mostly white boys anymore (not to dismiss the ladies or other minorities that did stick it out at those early hardcore shows)—it is a lot more diverse and in that, people are more aware of their words and actions and how everyone is deserving of a positive place to have a fun time to some ripping music.

I don't write any of this to undermine the Cleveland hardcore scene mostly centered around the '90s. Obviously it produced a lot of crazy shows and unique hardcore music. But read interviews with people from those bands, talk to the ones that are still around or occasionally go to shows. Even they acknowledge how fucked up those times were, to the point that bands would break up or go on hiatus because members had to get the fuck out of that city for a variety of reasons like the depressing effects of living in a rust belt city like Cleveland at the time from it generally being a super dangerous place and the damaging result on the scene from problems like rampant drug abuse. If anything, that period of music is glorified more by people that weren't there, or went to shows but weren't directly involved or a part of that particular scene. Because people that were heavily involved will tell you some crazy stories but you know they've seen and done a lot of fucked up shit themselves, and not in a good way.

Take *Destroy Cleveland*. Putting aside the terrible editing and cinematography for a moment, the director Matt Greenfield skims over a timeline of bands from the late '80s to early '00s, interviewing big names from the times to retell all the exciting stories, confirm or dismiss the rumors and embellished tales of violence at shows. Then it ends. He cuts it off with no acknowledgement that any sort of new scene is coming through post this era. It was released in mid 2015, and although there seemed to be some air of excitement around it at the time, there seemed to be more so a general feeling of unease in Cleveland that this was being relived. Matt Greenfield was never a part of the Cleveland scene and seems more psyched on the violence to actually look into why shows were fucked up, why people were fucked up. Apparently (I say apparently because I wasn't there as a witness) he punched a trans women in the face in Austin at a show shortly before the movie's release, justified it as "what punk is really about" as some sort of obsessive homage to Cleveland hardcore and then goes on to release this film nationally and internationally. People that are still active in the Cleveland scene, old and new, do not want to associate with this guy. His view of the Cleveland punk scene is not what the Cleveland scene is about today, and more so is just trying to ride this cult wave of glorifying the violence that to people in the scene was actually a super destructive and negative force.

On a positive note though, the younger scene stepped it up a notch after its release. Sick of everyone always talking about that older generation and sick of feeling like they didn't exist, at the end of 2015, Noid Films (done by Jake Black who drums in BAD NOIDS and did skate punk video zine *Condensed Flesh*) with help from Richard and a few other people, organized and released *Enjoy Cleveland*, the younger generation's rebuttal to this documentary. Fourteen bands from the new generation film two songs each in front of a green screen. After the last few years of coming together and starting bands, this was the new generation kicking down the door out into the world of their own Cleveland punk scene and slowly breaking away from the older generation they'd been stuck in the shadow of. Some of the older bands like INMATES and DARVOCETS and now 9 SHOCKS TERROR do the show on odd occasions and it's a big deal, people come out of the woodwork for it. But the new scene is gaining its own footing. And what I'm trying to get at with this massive rant is that I just want Richard to know that this is due largely in part to his hard work and people like him, so he shouldn't dumb it down like it's no big deal.



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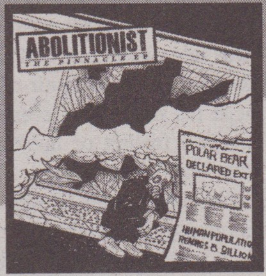

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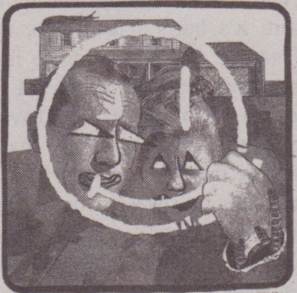

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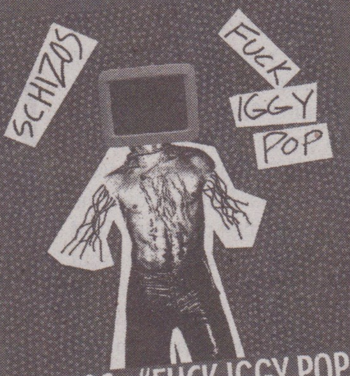


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# RIÑA

INTERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION
BY ANJELICA YOUNG
PHOTOS BY DULCE LA MUERTA
ART BY NATASHA AND MAYE

## FANI: GUITAR – NADIA: VOCALS – BLANQUI: BASS – CHEIVY: DRUMS

Riña took the time to chat with me from their practice space in México D.F. on a hot night in March. Narco violence, social inequality, machismo, poverty, and unemployment are just a few of the problems members of Riña face as part of their daily routines in surviving in this monstrous city. Despite all of those atrocities, these four are some of the sweetest and coolest people I've ever met.

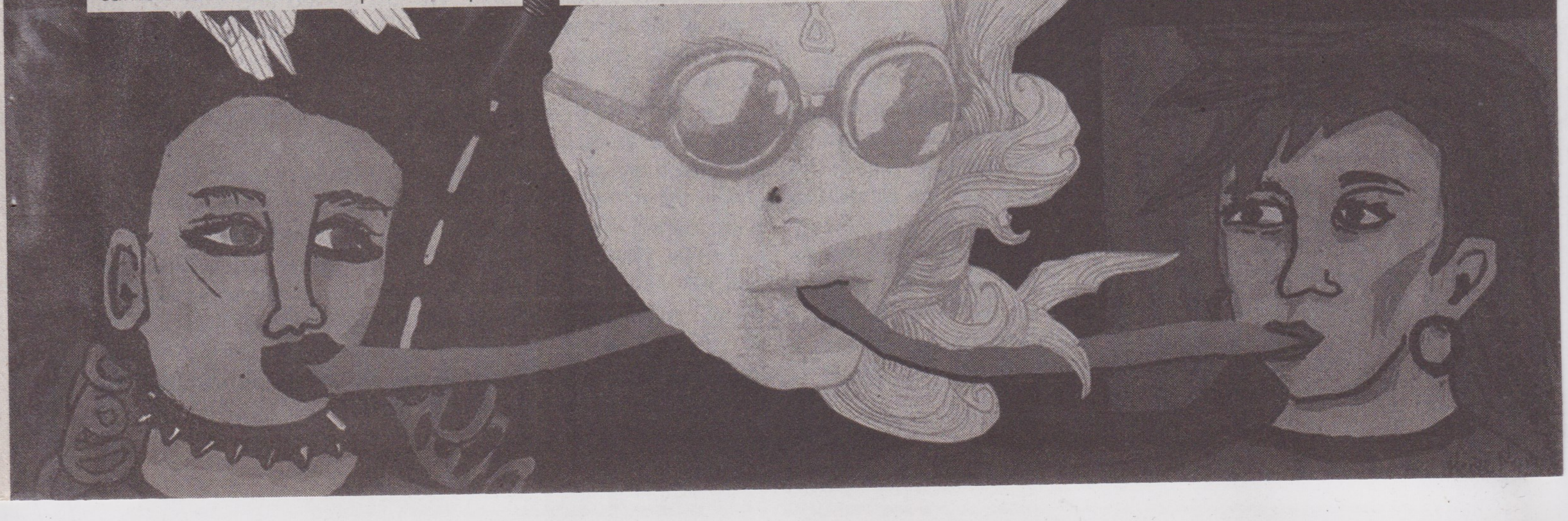
Fani: We should show her the room.
Cheivy: We rearranged it.

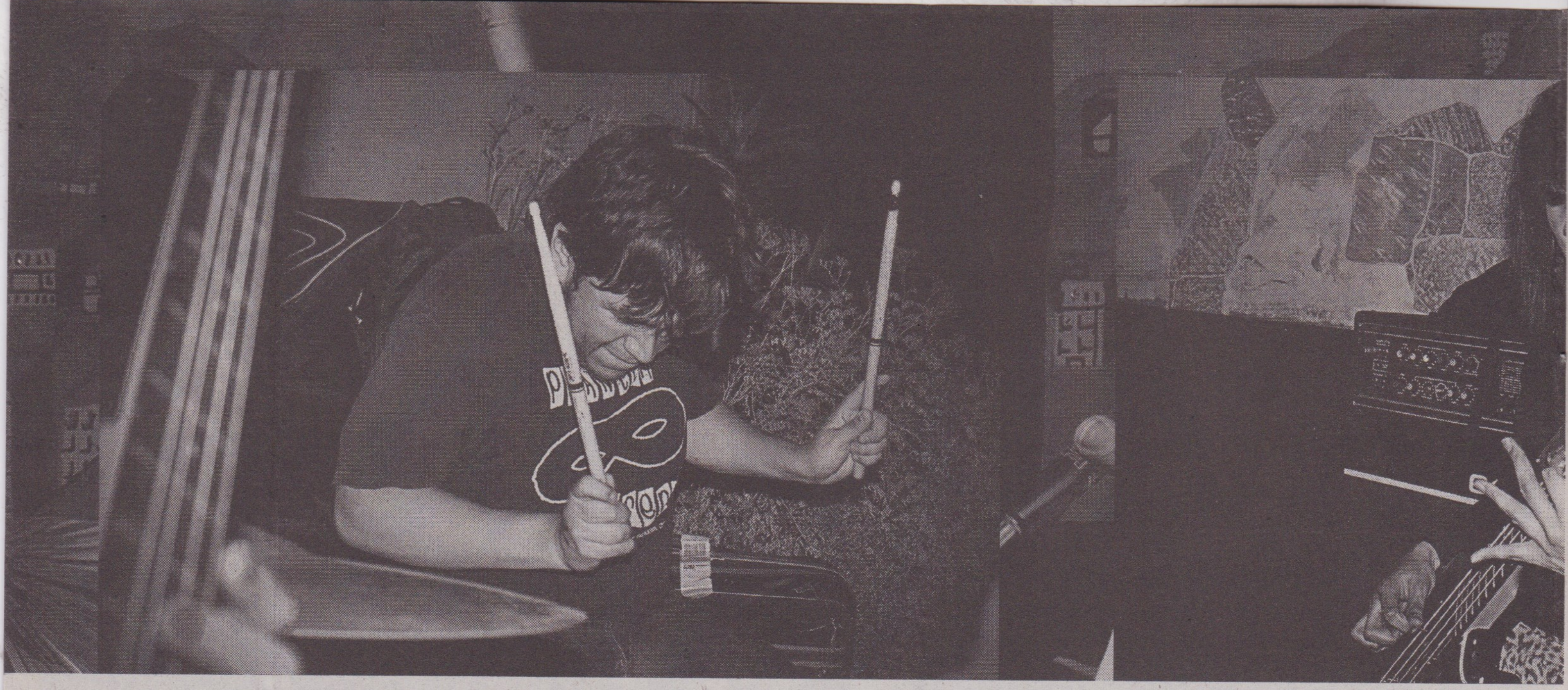
**MRR: It looks really good! Tell me a little about it.**
Blanqui: Anti-Sex went through five practice spaces and we wanted a place where we could be sure that we could practice when we needed to. Fani and I were playing together and she moved into this new house so we thought it would be cool to work on this room, so it was basically the two of us gathering the material. We'd go to el Centro and then be on the bus with a bunch of fabric and acoustic panels. Then Nadia came and we started to put stuff up. It was a lot of work but it was OK because we were working for something that we wanted and that was going to help both us and other bands who needed it. We started to get everything set up and get the stuff we needed, amps and instruments. We have instruments that are always there. A few women and I are learning to play drums there—we know that no one is going to be like, "Oh you suck, you're not learning." It's a good space to be in.

**MRR: How did you all decide to play together?**
Fani: Well because we were friends, right?... Look at Cheivy's face, he's not convinced that we're friends.

**MRR: Cheivy?**
Cheivy: At first we didn't really talk that much. Fani and I started playing together just to see what would happen because neither of us were up to a lot at that time. We played that Chute de Esperma cover.

**MRR: I really like your covers.**
Fani: We were trying to play that one that goes [singing] "*represion policial, represion policial,*" remember? Descontrolados from Ecuador. Blanqui was teaching me guitar. The first song I learned was "The KKK Took My Baby





Away." We went to see Nadia acting in Camino Roja de Isabela. We heard a scream in the dark theater and I didn't know who it was. When we found out it was her we were like, "Oh, fuck yeah!"
Nadia: I wanted to have a band where I just screamed and everything fell into place. At first we wanted a woman to drum but we kept meeting women who didn't know how to play yet and wanted to learn, but they never showed up to play. We didn't want to keep waiting around and we realized that Cheivy and Fani were playing together. It's like the band was already there, we just had to realize it.

**MRR: So in one moment the idea for the band was to have all women?**
Blanqui: Well yeah, because most bands are still mainly men, so that was our first idea, but Cheivy was a better fit. He and Nadia have known each other for so long and we all got really close with him. That's what makes the band work.
Fani: Que viva Cheivy!

**MRR: How'd you come up with the name Riña?**
Fani: We came up with it together. Nadia had shaved her head at that time so we thought about calling it Alopecia. Then Cheivy suggested Alopesia Social because of the band Caries Social. We thought it was funny at first but then it stopped being funny. We had a lot of ideas but nothing stuck. We got invited to our first show and we had to choose. I don't know how we ended up with Riña but it's good, it's short, it's feminine and it has the ñ so it's hard to say [*laughing*] but that's off the record.

**MRR: In the last few years there seem to have been a lot of changes in regards to who is being represented in bands, who is booking shows etc. How has your scene received you? How do you feel playing shows and participating in the way that you are? Do you think these changes are related to being in bigger cities?**
Fani: I think that now it's easier than it was before. There were a lot more bands that were just men and then Nadia and Violeta had their bands (Avichines and Cremalleras). Now it's better received but there are still comments or a soundguy who thinks we don't know how to connect our instruments. It all depends on who is at the shows.
Nadia: When I started drumming in Avichines I felt vulnerable. I got nervous and felt that I had to play really well but my nerves would take over and I'd make a lot of mistakes. I always have to rearrange the kit because I'm a lefty, so there were a lot of factors at play. I thought that it was just part of my personality, but eventually I realized that feeling that way was also related to being a women and to the pressure of always having to measure up. Sometimes people don't see what we're playing, they don't see us as a whole, as a band. They see women playing and say, "Oh you play so good, you're killing it," or the other extreme, say that we suck. I'm not there to have them say that to me, or to receive compliments. That's not the point for me. Little by little I'm breaking down those barriers. I'm learning to let loose and stop giving a fuck. Each time it's easier to deal with those situations, but to this day they're still saying a lot of stupid stuff. Sometimes it's just what someone wants to say to you, it isn't always a gender thing.
F: At first we (f) wanted to have a band and do things that weren't really being done. Not so that we could be seen as the ones doing it, but because we thought they were important. It's a good moment here, all of the women who see each other out at shows talk to each other and get together. We toured México with Fumigados last year. I think the worst place was Veracruz, but it wasn't just a machismo thing, it was also about them being proud of where they were from. It seems like they don't like bands from other cities playing there and they were screaming shit like "marry me" and "mami" and who knows what else and it was really uncomfortable. We just played and took off. But most of the tour was really cool. A lot of people put in a lot of hard work to make that tour possible. Monterrey was also really good to us.
The first time that we played in Toluca when Warthog came there were all male bands. We were the only women playing. But now there are more bands with women in them. They were always there, they always came out to the shows, but now they're participating in a different way. After we played they came up to talk to us. When we played in Oaxaca there was only one other band with women in it, called las Animalas. It was cool talking to them. I think it has a lot to do with being in bigger cities but now with the Internet that has changed a lot. You can see more bands from different places that have some diversity of members. It's no longer the same stereotypical dudes.

**MRR: What do you think of the idea that it's sexist to organize a fest or compilation seeking out bands with women in them?**
Blanqui: Punk and metal are almost always related to or made for men. Some bands have misogynist lyrics and images on their record covers. A friend (f) of mine from Spain posted about some punk fest where there wasn't a single woman playing. To me those things are more sexist and objectifying than us (f) wanting to be included or to include ourselves in compilations or fests because we do things well, not just because we're women. Seeing that as sexist is a misunderstanding, because we're (f) just making sure that it's understood that we (f) too have something to say about punk, we also have complaints about society and our experiences. I think they're just complaining that they no longer have the space that they had before.
Fani: There was just a fucking skate fest where the prize for the female category was 5,000 pesos and prize for the male category was 30,000 pesos—a difference of 25,000 pesos! So it's something that happenes everywhere, Science, film, any field, and it sucks. It's not like we all got here by people opening doors for us because we're women. We had to make this space, to meet each other and do a lot of work. These relationships are very powerful, between women and people doing things because we like to do them, not because we feel we have to prove anything to anyone. It makes me laugh when all of a sudden people are like "Oh you like that band? I didn't know you liked hardcore." Well I also like the Ramones, you know? It's pop and I like it. It's not like I grabbed the guitar and said, "Fuck yeah, I'm gonna play really fast so they can see I'm so *macha*." It's like people try so hard to reject being politically correct that they call people who really don't have representation sexist now that we have a little of it.
Cheivy: Some fests that aren't that good, like the Cabronas Fest. They use the image of women playing but it's superficial. I think the best way to do it if you're going to invite a band with women in it is to do it because you like their music or their style.
Fani: The Cabronas Fest is organized by this dude who is well-known for being a misogynist. Feminism suddenly got popular and they started doing all this shit.

**MRR: Do you ever feel tokenized when you're invited to a fest?**
Blanqui: Sometimes. But it's easy to tell when someone is doing that. It's similar to when white people invite bands with Latinxs to fests just to make themselves look good. That hasn't happened to us that often. People appreciate what we do and that's how it should always be, no matter who is being represented in a band.
Fani: "Tokenized" is such a gringo term and it applies to gringo dynamics and a tendency to convert everything, even political beliefs, into a system of capital. It happens in a different way here. We've been invited because we "don't sound like Bikini Kill," "play fast," or for being women by the people who were using the term "feminazi" and saying that people only liked our bands because we were women two years ago. Now that there is so much information available about feminism and queer theory some people skipped a lot in terms of coming to an understanding of gender violence and their relationship to it and sometimes their roles in perpetuating it. People give gender priority over race or socioeconomic status or living in a third world country. A lot of people don't question their role in these things.

**MRR: Blanqui, can you tell us about the *Siempre Estuvimos Aquí* compilation that you put together?**
Blanqui: The only other comps featuring female-fronted bands that I had seen are the ones from the 80s. And I haven't ever seen those in person. The bands on those comps weren't that well known and some only have the one song that's on the comp. I'm sure there are a lot more that I don't know about, but anyway I wanted to go with that idea and show people that we're here and we're doing cool stuff. I started getting to know current bands that were worth sharing, that needed to be heard.

There are a few bands from here in México. In Spain there were more bands with women. There's one on there from Japan called Saka la Fiesta. I met a lot of people who are excited about punk through this project. There's a lot of women out there who want to do their own fests, who are organizing their own shows, who have written interesting lyrics, like Rote Zora from Spain who have cool feminist lyrics. To me that's important because of the moment in history that we are living in México and in a lot of places in the world. Whoever has this tape in their hands can see that what women are saying is important and this is what is happening. Maybe some men don't want to see it and maybe a lot of other women don't want to see it but there it is. I think

that some bands are becoming more well-known because they participated in the comp—they've gotten invited to play outside of their cities. It isn't just something that I did for myself or to put my bands out there. Now people know what the bands who participated are up to, both men and women. There are men in these bands too, but it's cool to show that together we can do a lot of cool things.

**MRR: Cool! Fani, can you tell us a little about the benefit that you organized?**

Fani: Narcoestado was coming and we thought that they'd bring a bunch of people out. During that time there were a lot of touring bands playing shows, and I thought it would be cool to do something that wasn't just for us. I mean it's good to have some fun, but I wanted to do something with a purpose beyond that. Everyone loves Narcoestado, and Tercer Mundo played too, it was kind of a secret but then everyone found out. In México abortion is legal for any reason in the first trimester of a pregnancy. That's the federal law but then it varies state by state—each of the 32 states have their own governments who then decide whether or not it is legal. In a lot of states, like Oaxaca for example, you can only get an abortion if you were raped. And in México D.F. there are several places where you can get a free abortion like the Marie Stopes clinic. Veracruz is a crazy state. It's a port so a lot of drugs move through there and it's controlled by los Zetas. The Governor is hiding out because he left the state in debt. Everyone knows how corrupt he is. He's involved with los Zetas, he orders journalists to be killed, some of them have come from Veracruz to the D.F. He's backed by the President, they're both from the PRI and now he's a fugitive. He even escaped in a fucking government helicopter.

He decided to make abortion illegal in Veracruz. This had been going on for a month when Yecal and I found out Narcoestado was coming so we decided to make the show a benefit for feminist group in Veracruz called Akelarre. They (f) buy Plan B and Misoprostol and also raise awareness and work on making safe abortion networks. The show was really good, a lot of people came out, it was fun, Narcoestado and Tercer Mundo played really well, we played, Mujercitos, Trauma. It was a great show and it made me feel really good, the people who played the show also paid to get in and didn't ask for list spots. We raised a lot of money, enough for thirty-five abortions. We know that we have an impact that goes beyond just ourselves.

**MRR: Do you organize other shows or just that one benefit?**

Fani: It depends on who it is. The last one I did with Yecatl was for Rakta from Brazil last week and it was good. I try to put on shows for bands that I like because it's a pain in the ass to find all of the equipment and to get it to the show so it has to be worth it. I also did Patsy's show when they came in a feminist space and it was really cool. We also organize one together called the Tocada Hexagonal that highlights bands with women in them. We've done three so far. That's the first time we played with Riña, we played the four songs that we had. Niño Idiota from Puebla, that name is so good, Cremalleras...

Blanqui: Descarnada from Monterrey.

Nadia: Especie Fallida, Mujercitos , Trauma, Anti-Sex, I think that's all. Did Ultimo Imperio play?

Fani: Yeah.

**MRR: So where do you like to play? Is it hard to find somewhere to play?**

Cheivy: I don't really like bars. Almost all the shows are at bars in el Centro. It's cool that they let us do shows there but they start charging us too much. But that's all there is. It's hard to find other places to play. We could in the outskirts of the city but people are lazy and wouldn't want to go.

Nadia: We have to say somewhere where we like to play, but I don't know. El punto Gozadera is cool. You can drink outside because there are no cops. It's in a park where people get high and the police aren't really around.

Fani: It's always bars, damn bars, and they suck. At first they want to seem nice. When there are shows they sell so much fucking beer and food that they wouldn't have sold if it hadn't been for the show. It's always cool the first few times but then they try to make you feel like they're doing you a favor. Fucking Pollo Rock started charging us, they wanted a 3,000 peso deposit and we were like ok, we'll give it to them. Then for the last few shows they were like, "Uh, you stole a screen that wasn't even fucking there, you broke the bathroom doors that were already broken," just to keep the deposit. It's always like that, they want to come across as nice but then when they see that it's going well for us, that we're getting money to pay the bands then they start asking for money and acting like assholes. And you've already done shows with them before but if you want to do another one they're like, "Yeah, but you have to come speak to me personally." And it sucks having to cross the whole fucking city to go talk to them. El Punto Gozadera has been good to us. El Centro de Salud sucks. We did the first Tocada Hexagonal there but each time they get worse and worse. They kicked out some of our friends who were behaving and everything but brought a beer in from outside, or if they found a bottle of anise or something they'd kick them out. That sucks, to go to a punk show and to be searched at the door. It's just a fucking bar.

Nadia: Virutas and Yair and some other people from FZ10 have been doing Total Descontrol for about three years. The first one was in Xochimilco. They're events that they do in the outskirts of the city. You can bring whatever you want in. They can get out of control and be a little sketchy but it's cool because you know what you're in for. Obviously you don't have to let people get away with everything but you're not going to get mad if you get bumped into. I've had fun at those shows.

**MRR: I've seen that in the last few years punk in México D.F. has been getting more international attention. More bands are touring there, bands from there are playing fests or touring the U.S. and Europe. How does this affect the scene?**

Blanqui: I don't really like this situation. There are bands who play because they really like playing, but some only play because they want to attach themselves to the recognition that the city has so that they can get famous or go on tour. I think maybe we shouldn't have international recognition until we recognize each other for what we're doing. There shouldn't be competition about which band plays best or which band deserves to go on tour to the U.S. At the end of the day that's really the least important part of this. I think it's important to be doing something you like. I've always wanted to play in bands ever since I was very young. When I was sixteen I wanted to play because because I love complaining and I want to complain about everything, you know?

**MRR: Hell yeah!**

Blanqui: I wanted to be in a band for those reasons, because I wanted to be around people who liked the same things as me. Lately there has been a lot of competition in the city I think it comes from the international attention that we've been getting. I don't think it's sincere to compete with someone who is doing the same thing that you are, with whom you could just as easily share music and ideas. It's becoming more, "Oh, I want to be famous and have money and step on everyone else," and that isn't punk. I don't like it, but that's just my perspective.

**MRR: Everyone wants to be a rockstar.**

Cheivy: I think that phenomenon exists in most big cities because there are so many people and so many different scenes. In our scene bands from other places didn't really start coming here until a few years ago, and there was more of a sense of camaraderie. Now the scene is a lot bigger and there are more kinds people and it's inevitable that that stuff starts to happen.

Fani: A lot of the bands come just to say that they've been to México. They show up late to the show and don't see the local bands, they don't try to hang out, you know? Putting on a show here isn't the most complicated thing in the world but it takes time to find the equipment and talk to the people at the venues. Punk is more than just music and noise, you get to meet a lot of people who you have a lot in common with even if you grew up in really different circumstances. So if suddenly a band isn't going to come because one dude forgot that you needed a passport to get into México and you already had the whole show organized, well that sucks! The merch situation also sucks because they sell stuff in dollars as though they didn't know that a dollar is worth 20 pesos. So you go to a show and you want to buy a shirt but it's like 150 pesos. That's a shitload of money for us. They don't even ask if their prices are OK. There's also bands who ask like, "Is 30 pesos OK for a tape?" but then you see it on their list for 80. Even 40, 50 pesos is expensive for a tape here. People don't have empathy for the people living in the place where they're on tour and that isn't cool.

**MRR: So it's kinda turned into tourism?**

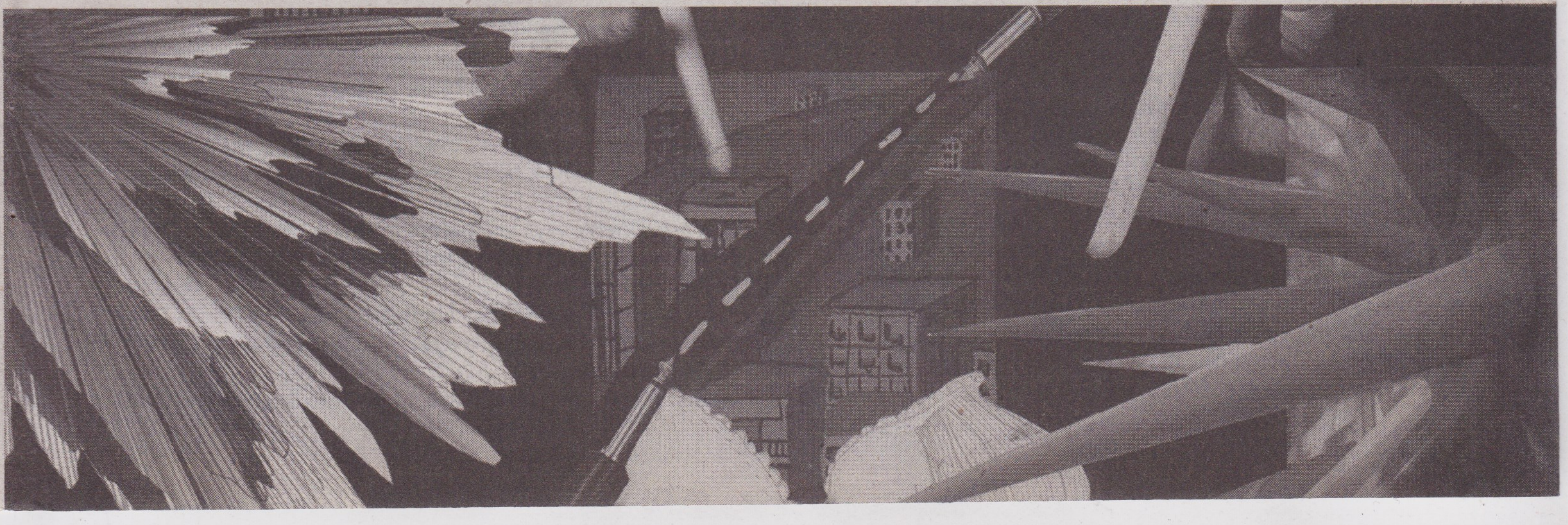
Fabiola: Yeah. But they aren't all like that. When Lysol came they asked us what was up and hung out with us and got to know new people. Then there are the bands that come and don't even talk to you, they're with their same friends as always. That really sucks.

Nadia: I think there used to be a more genuine idea of booking and going to shows. Things used to be more sincere and it felt better. More of a community rather than trying to see who is who or having to prove anything to anyone. Now it's all about who is playing which show, no one wants to open, everyone wants to play right before the headliner so that more people can see them. I think that there are a lot of changes to be made from both sides. It's turned into people coming to México just to say that they've been here. And we're nice to them, they have a good time, everything is really cheap, people are nice, I don't know but I think that's how they perceive it here.

**MRR: Do you want to talk a little about the conditions today in México and how that affects punk and your daily lives?**

Blanqui: No one knows what to say.

Nadia: It affects each person differently. Six years ago during the elections there was more of a spirit of wanting to do something. Even though we didn't get together to debate or anything, we agreed about stuff. Moreso in going to protests and being clear that we weren't happy about the conditions and we didn't want the president. We got involved in other movements. We don't have the power to organize with a lot of people, so the best thing we can do is join in with what other groups are doing. I



think that this year, even though all this has happened, there isn't the same spirit of wanting to do something collectively between all of us who always see each other out at shows. It's more individual now, everyone has their own groups.

Fani: Right now we're exhausted from all the bullshit that's always happening all around us. Punk provides an escape from that in the form of hanging out and partying. And that's important too. When you're close to someone you know that they're really pissed off about how things are going. Between us (f) and also with Cheivy we talk about what worries us or what sucks a lot, but it isn't so generalized anymore, we aren't all getting together and saying, "Oh, we should all do something about these horrible things." Because then the same shit as before will happen again, fighting about who is going to say what or what is going to be said. It's hard to have an inclusive point of view. In small groups like a band we see things similarly, that's part of why we have this band. We have empathy for each other. Even though we aren't all affected by exactly the same things, we know what affects each person and we can talk about that together.

**MRR: Do you believe in electoral politics? Are you gonna vote in 2018?**

Blanqui: I don't believe in the sincerity of a lot of people, especially people in power. Money is easy for them and they're selfish and don't care about others as long as they're doing well. They maintain appearances and say that everything is going to be ok or that they're going to do something for the people in their country.

I don't know if I'll vote. The last few times I voted it was like I never even voted at all because the majority won, and I don't feel that I'm part of that majority. Who knows what those people are thinking, what they want for the people they care about. They're selfish and they don't even think about people who have less money than they do, people who need free healthcare. And they're the majority, they're the people who voted for the president that we have right now. They had no idea what he was about they were just like, oh yeah that guy is attractive, I'm gonna vote for him. If I vote this time I want to be really well informed about the proposals and investigate the candidates intentions.

Cheivy: I'm not going to vote. I think it's a waste of time. The political class is always going to watch out for itsef.

Nadia: I don't think democracy has worked in this country, I'll see how I feel, if I have time I'll go and defend the right that I have to vote. I'll probably do it even though I know that my vote won't make a difference.

Fani: This country is a disaster. You can tell that democracy hasn't worked here, or anywhere else in the world. There has been a lot of electoral fraud. I like to do all that I can so that I don't feel like I didn't do anything. A lot of people who I talk to from the U.S. have said, "Oh, my vote isn't going to make a difference." But the people who voted for Trump won. Clinton was also a terrible candidate. Trump has real consequences for real people, and for the people who I feel most idenfitied with. If I were a gringa and I hadn't done anything to stop Trump I'd feel like shit now.

In México's history a lot of people have fought to vote because that's the only way that you can express yourself, even though it's in a really minimal way and with few real options, in a system that blocks everything you want to say. So I think I will end up voting. It's like what I said about Trump, Clinton sucks too, but I would have looked for another alternative or people who were doing something different. Not voting is a privilege for people who have a ton of power and money to buy votes. I don't think that voting is the way to fix this country, but I can't just cross my arms if this small opportunity exists.

**MRR: What are your musical influences?**

Fani: Britney Spears. Like as a band or each person?

**MRR: Both!**

Fani: When we first started I didn't know how to play guitar so I wrote some riffs as I was learning and Blanqui and Cheivy told me what sounded good. I learned to use a pedal that they gave me and I learned by adjusting different things on the pedal and my amp. We wanted to do something like Desechables or Último Resorte but we don't sound like that, we have our own sound. It's Blanqui's first time playing bass in a band and Nadia's first time doing vocals, Cheivy has his own style on the drums [*Ed. note: he plays with his arms crossed*], so we made our own sound.

Blanqui: I don't have a band or rhythm or genre that I wanted to sound like on bass. Before starting to play with Riña I had a lot of post-punk, bass-driven bands in mind. I really like the bass parts in Joy Division, Asylum Party, and the Adverts. I don't play like that yet but I'd like to learn to in this band.

Cheivy: That's my style too, whatever comes out, and it's usually always tupa tupa, fast hardcore.

Nadia: My influneces have always been women who sang well, but obviously I don't sing like that. So my way of expressing myself is always with a broken voice and it goes well with the band.

**MRR: And as a band?**

Cheivy: The bands whose songs we covered like Chute de Esperma, Guerilla Urbana from Uraguay.

Nadia: Último Resorte!

Fani: We were going to cover "Cristo Anticristo" by Último Resorte but I could never play it as fast as it's supposed to be.

Blanqui: Cheivy says Instigators from the UK.

Fani: We have a drum part that we stole from…

Cheivy: Don't tell her!

Fani: Off the record. Pero Nada by Salón Dadá from Perú. I showed Cheivy and he played it and that's how we wrote "Yo No Voy a Madurar."

Nadia: A lot of our songs have come from Blanqui and Cheivy

playing while Fani is setting up, then she finishes and joins in and I record what they're playing. They're always like, "Oh, we forgot how that went" and I'm like, "Nope, I recorded it!" Then we'll listen to it again and work on it from there. I write most of the lyrics but sometimes they make suggestions.
Fani: I like simple riffs that sound good. Rik Agnew plays some really cool stuff using one ugly note and some crazy riffs and chords. Riña is fun because we're not trying to go for a particular sound or be the fastest band or have the craziest riffs. Cheivy wants us to play faster, he wants us to play metal and he wants a double kick pedal for the bass drum

**MRR: Of course he does. What are the lyrics about?**
Nadia: A lot of them come from my personal experience, things that move me during my daily routine living in this city or frustrations that come up because things aren't how you want them to be. They're things that other people can relate to. Then there are some that talk about something specific like "Vulnerables." That one is about the femecides in Chihuahua. Fani sent me an article that really affected me. Cheivy wants us to write happier lyrics, that's how I came up with "Dejen Vivir a lxs Marginadxs." It's the only happy one.

**MRR: Tell me a little about the demo art. You used it for the 7" too.**
Nadia: Yeah. Well we didn't know what to do for the cover. We did some collages but we never really got what we wanted. One of my friends is getting a Masters and as part of her research she's working in a jail with both men and women. She showed me some of the zines and murals that the women in Santa Marta Acatitla were making. I especially liked Natasha and Maye's work, they're a couple and Natasha is French and Maye is Mexican. They also do stuff with theatre. A few months ago the play Casa Calabaza that Maye wrote was presented in the city. It explains how she ended up in jail. We asked them to do something for our demo. My friend coordinated the exchange and bought the collage from them because we didn't have any money to buy it at the time. The original is 30" by 30". The first material that Natasha and Maye bought was colorful because it was rare for them to have money to buy something like that in jail. The first thing my friend told me about it was that it was going to have a lot of colors. The artists didn't want it to say anywhere that it was made by

incarcerated women because they don't want to sell themselves that way. They don't want people to buy their art because they feel bad for them just because they're incarcerated. It was their idea to include the lyrics so I sent them and they did the collage.

**MRR: What do you think about a guy saying on a punk forum that he'd pay $50 for your demo?**
Cheivy: That's stupid, he should write to us and we'll give him one. He should buy us some beer instead of paying that much money.

**MRR: Which current bands in México can you recommend to us? Maybe not the most famous ones that everyone already knows.**
Cheivy: I like Crico, they're crazy and have a Japanese '80s style.
Fani: There's a new band called Secreto Público.
Cheivy: I also like Trauma.
Nadia: Nada, Cartografia del Desastre and Die Fast from D.F.
Blanqui: There's a few in Toluca but I've only seen them play live and I don't remember their names.
Fani: Colapso.
Blanqui: Yeah! And Cavernas from Monterrey.

**MRR: What are Riña's plans for the future?**
Fani: World domination, to get drunk and eat pizza together. And for Cheivy to finally go vegan.
Nadia: To write happy songs for Cheivy.

**MRR: That's sweet. Here's a fun one: What do you like better? Tacos or tortas? I know what Fani is gonna say, Cheivy too, I think.**
Fani: Lets see, what do I prefer?

**MRR: Tacos.**
Fani: Obviously. They're humanity's best invention.

**MRR: I've never seen you eat a torta.**
Fani: Yeah, of course not, my basic diet only consists of tacos.
Blanqui: Tacos dorados.
Cheivy: Tortas.

**MRR: I knew it!**
Nadia: Tacos, definitely tacos.

**MRR: Cheivy is the weird one, he likes tortas and happy music.**
Fani: He likes tacos too, especially if they're free.

**MRR: Anything else you'd like to say?**
Fani: Thanks for doing this interview. I love you three a lot and I love playing in Riña.
Blanqui: It's cool that people are interested in our bands and what we're doing. This is an escape from our daily lives. I couldn't have had a band like this with anyone else, I feel comfortable and I know I'm with the right people.
Nadia: It's so cool that doing what we love has brought us to this point. That and let's get pizza.
Cheivy: I hope punks get crazier.
Fani: I'd like to use this moment to remind Cheivy that he's owed me some tacos and beer for a long time now.

*Riña's demo came out in June last year and their 7" just came out on Cintas Pepe. They're all armed with U.S. visas and set to do a West Coast tour with Anti-Sex and Blank Spell this August. They want to hang out with you, drink beer, and eat pizza. Don't miss them becasue they're one of the best and most punk bands playing right now.*

# DAUÐYFLIN

*Dauðyflin are a four-piece hardcore punk band from Iceland. They play fast, get in your face, and cut through the bullshit. In a place whose brief history of hardcore punk is mostly made up of bro-y woe-is-me machismo posturing, saying they are a breath of fresh air just doesn't quite do them justice. While other parts of the Icelandic music scene have been trying to capture the majesty of the Icelandic wilderness, Dauðyflin come closer to the feeling of wading through puddles of vomit and broken glass in the early hours of a Sunday morning.*

*Interview and introduction by Þórir Georg Jónsson. Photos provided by Guacharaka Vil, taken at Villatruno. Art provided by the band.*

**MRR: Who are Dauðyflin? And what does the name mean?**

Alexandra: Dauðyflin are me on vocals, Dísa on bass, Fannar on drums and Júlíana on guitar. The name means something like "The Deadbeats."

**MRR: Three-quarters of this band have been playing together for a long time now. In fact this is the third band made up of this core of people. Why always a new band? Are you not interested in the fame and riches that can come from building one's brand?**

Júlíana: We just want to do new things. Fuck branding

Dísa: Also since our community is so small, if you want to start a new band there are not that many people who would be interested. So we end up playing with the same people in different bands.

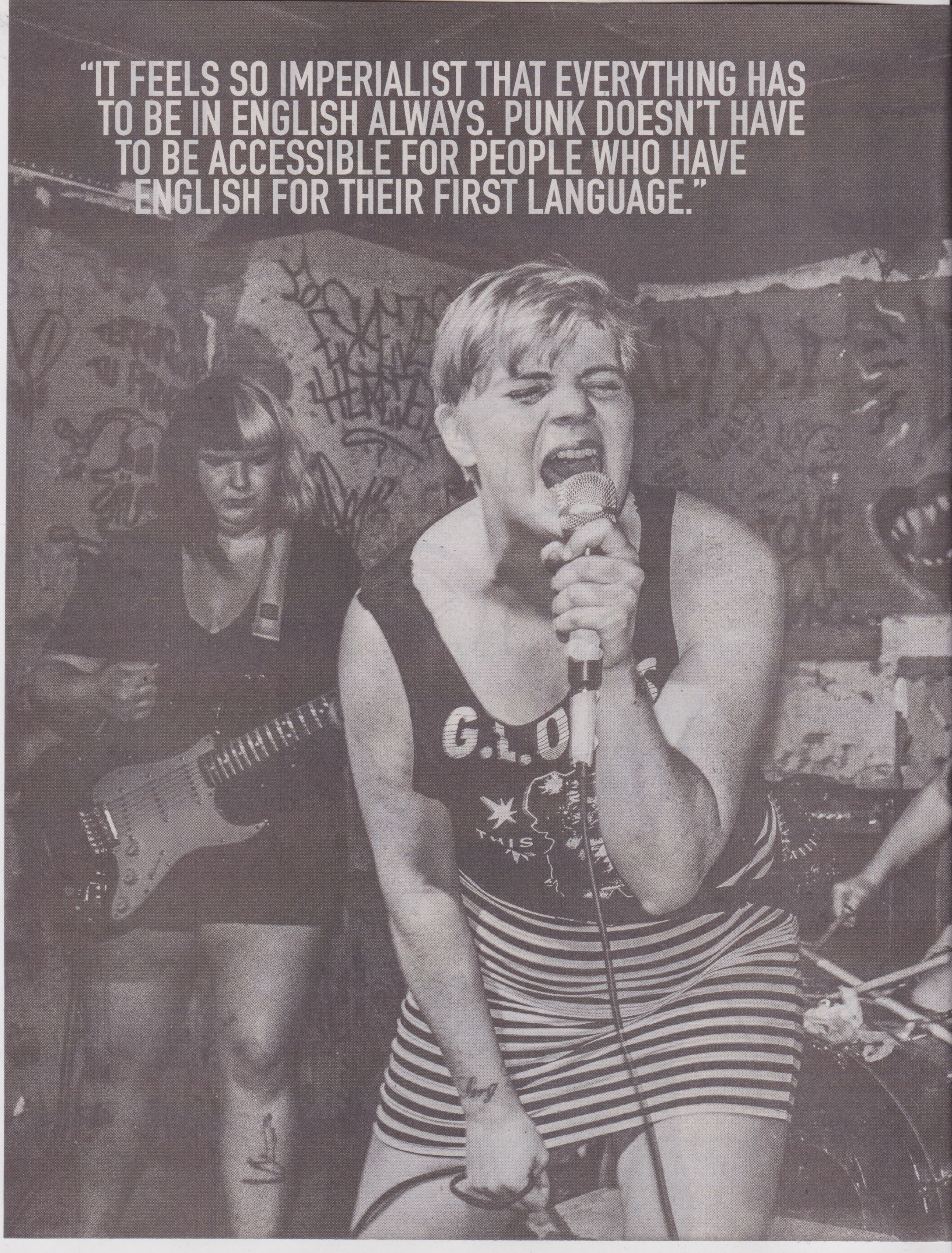
Fannar: Tentacles of Doom ended because the guitar player went to South America for an extended period of time and Börn has been on hiatus since the guitar player went to study abroad and then had a baby.

Alexandra: I feel like every person in the band matters, so when someone has to leave the band for some reason that band no longer exists.

Júlíana: Then I just had to learn how to play the guitar, since there were no more guitar players available so we could start more bands.

**MRR: Your lyrics are in Icelandic, a language only a handful of people speak. Is there a reason for this other than you just being more comfortable expressing yourself in your native tongue?**

Fannar: Well, I think it is pretty cool to be a band from a remote location and taking that to the full extent. I like listening to bands that use their own language. I feel like I've heard so many European


"IT FEELS SO IMPERIALIST THAT EVERYTHING HAS TO BE IN ENGLISH ALWAYS. PUNK DOESN'T HAVE TO BE ACCESSIBLE FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE ENGLISH FOR THEIR FIRST LANGUAGE."

bands that maybe aren't that great to begin with, and them singing in English can sometimes emphasize the fact that they sound like third-rate copies of US hardcore bands. And then we have bands that kind of create their own world with the music. As if the rest of the world doesn't concern them at all. That's kind of cool to me.
Dísa: Also we feel that music doesn't have to be made only for the English-speaking market. And Icelandic also just sounds tough. Writing lyrics in a language other than your native is always different, even if you're pretty fluent in English.
Fannar: Like with our lyrics, which are both sincere and ironic at the same time and there's a certain nuance that's difficult to achieve in a language that you don't hear and speak every day. It also feels so imperialist that everything has to be in English always.
Dísa: The majority of people in Europe don't necessarily speak English so it'ws not always better for them to listen to bands in English than Icelandic.
Alexandra: Punk doesn't have to be accessible for people who have English for their first language.
Júlíana: *Mér er drull.*

**MRR: You sound quite angry, what are you singing about?**
Dísa: Killing people
Júlíana: Yes, mostly murder and maiming.
Alexandra: And how Iceland sucks.

**MRR: Iceland has this reputation of being this utopia of arts and liberalism which you clearly (rightly) don't agree with. How would you say living in Iceland differs from this image?**
Alexandra: I don't know how much people know about politics in Iceland but since the nation's independence Icelanders have mostly voted for conservative parties. Last spring our prime minister was uncovered for being totally corrupt in the so-called Panama papers. The people demanded to vote again, so last fall they voted for conservative parties again and other corrupt politicians who were in the Panama papers remain in the government.
Fannar: Yeah I mean, I guess we live in a bit of a bubble. We live downtown, our friends are young, lefty artists but still it's hard not to notice the conservatism. Iceland's been in the news a lot and you keep seeing the same things about Icelanders being so proud and liberal and not taking any shit, when in reality we're just codependent racists like everybody else. And the art thing…I mean sure we probably have a decent amount of weirdo art considering Iceland's small population, but it feels like a constant struggle.
Alexandra: Ten years ago the city center was filled with graffiti. Then a conservative decided that this was dirty, ugly, and not appealing for tourists and everything was painted over with grey paint. Now the tourist industry is booming and businesses are scrambling to keep up with the image Iceland has as a quirky arty utopia and are paying big-shot artists to paint big murals. With permits from the city like the conservative and bureaucratic hell-hole Reykjavík can be.
Fannar: I sort of hate those fucking murals. To me, what makes graffiti exciting is creative people, taking over public space. I mean some of them look nice but… whatever.
Alexandra: Absolutely.

**MRR: Historically punk is pretty big in Iceland, due in a big part to the legendary documentary *Rokk Í Reykjavík*. It's something most people would agree is a big part of Iceland's music history. Yet when you look back there's very little punk to speak of in regards to records released or bands that have been documented in any way. Do you feel like there´s any interested in punk in Iceland these days?**
Alexandra: I feel like Icelanders are pretty obsessed with how punk used to be and not how it is today
Fannar: Little feeling for modern punk scenes in other places in the world.
Dísa: There have of course been bands that have been active and not released anything.
Fannar: Punk as an underground movement has never really caught on like in the other Nordic Nations, like Sweden and Finland where punk has been an integral part of the underground music scene. Here it's mostly been metal, electronic music, and then maybe some indie rock.
Alexandra: There's a lot of nostalgia going on, like if there is a band that sounds like punk used to be then everyone goes nuts!
Fannar: I don't feel that is always the case.
Júlíana: People in Iceland generally tend to think of punk as just a period in music history and don't realize that there's a lot of punk going on in the rest of the world today.
Fannar: We realize that this might sound strange to some people reading this that might come from large cities with big punk and hardcore scenes, where it's easy to just be in your own little bubble. Like, why would you even consider how you fit in with the rest of the country? But since Iceland is so small the line between underground and mainstream music is thinner.
Dísa: Yeah, the whole music scene here is probably the size of the punk scene in some of the larger cities in the US. Everyone pretty much knows each other.

**MRR: How do you think that affects your sound? Do you think it causes non-punk influences to seep into your music?**
Fannar: I'm not too sure, to be honest. I mean, we write all the music together, somebody might bring a riff or two to practice or occasionally an almost finished song, but mostly we write songs together in the practice space, and we've never really sat down and discussed our sound or influences or what direction we want to take. So, I don't know. People in our local scene have compared us to black metal bands like Darkthrone and Bone Awl and I know I've used Bone Awl as a point of reference to describe our music to metal heads, but, just only because it's like noisy and stompy. If I had to describe the same element to a punk I'd probably use some Japanese noisecore band like Gai or whatever.
Dísa: Yeah, we basically just write music that we think sounds good. It's probably influenced by a lot of the music that we listen to now and have listened to throughout the years, but like Fannar said we have never sat down and made a conscious decision about what we want our music to sound like.

GUNS N' ROSES

**MRR: What is it like being in a hardcore band in Reykjavík? Are there places to play? People to play with? I guess what I'm really trying to ask is, is there enough pogoing?**
Alexandra: There is no pogoing.
Dísa: We usually just play with the same people, our friends' bands.
Fannar: Downtown Reykjavík used to be the epicenter of all things related to music and arts but it has been going through a lot of changes lately due to the boom of tourism in Iceland. A lot of places where we used to be able to book shows are no longer around so we have been trying to find new places outside of the center.
Júlíana: And because the city is so small we often end up playing shows with a lot of random bands from different genres, and sometimes we are the only punk band.

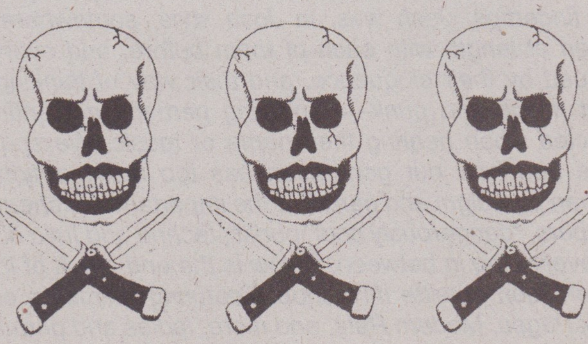
**MRR: All your releases look so sick, who does all the artwork? Are there any particular influences / references when it comes to the visual side of the band?**
Dísa: Fannar and Júlíana do all the artwork for the band.
Júlíana: Not really, but we made the decision to use soft colors traditionally associated with femininity (like pink and mint green) in juxtaposition with graphic and violent images.
Fannar: Well, when we started to talk about artwork, we did talk a little bit about girl gang movies and we looked at Hellen Jo's girl gang illustrations and when Júlíana designed the skull with the crossed switchblades that kinda felt like our gang logo. Also for the cover of our upcoming LP, I got the idea from well there's this Wormlust tape, I think it's an old demo or a re-release of an old demo. Anyway, the tape's cover is this illustration that's obviously pretty inspired by Black Sabbath's *Born Again* and I was really inspired by the flat, ugly color composition. It felt so aggressive and powerful. I mean our cover is not really similar, but the idea was born from seeing that.

**MRR: You played the K-Town festival last summer and did a European tour. How did all that go? Do you have any plans for touring some more?**
Alexandra: K-Town was really great. We are grateful that they gave a small, unknown band from Iceland the chance to play and the reception was generally very positive.
Dísa: The tour was also amazing, I think it's important for us to get the chance to go to other places and meet new people who are involved with the punk community. It kind of gives us inspiration to keep going and reminds us that there are a lot of like-minded people out there in the world, even though it doesn't always feel that way to us.
Fannar: It's also great to get to play a show for punks every once in awhile. I really enjoyed going to southern Europe where punk is such a loaded concept and strongly associated with community, when we're used to being pretty much the only punks around and punk is pretty much meaningless to most people.
Júlíana: We'll be touring the US with Xylitol this summer.

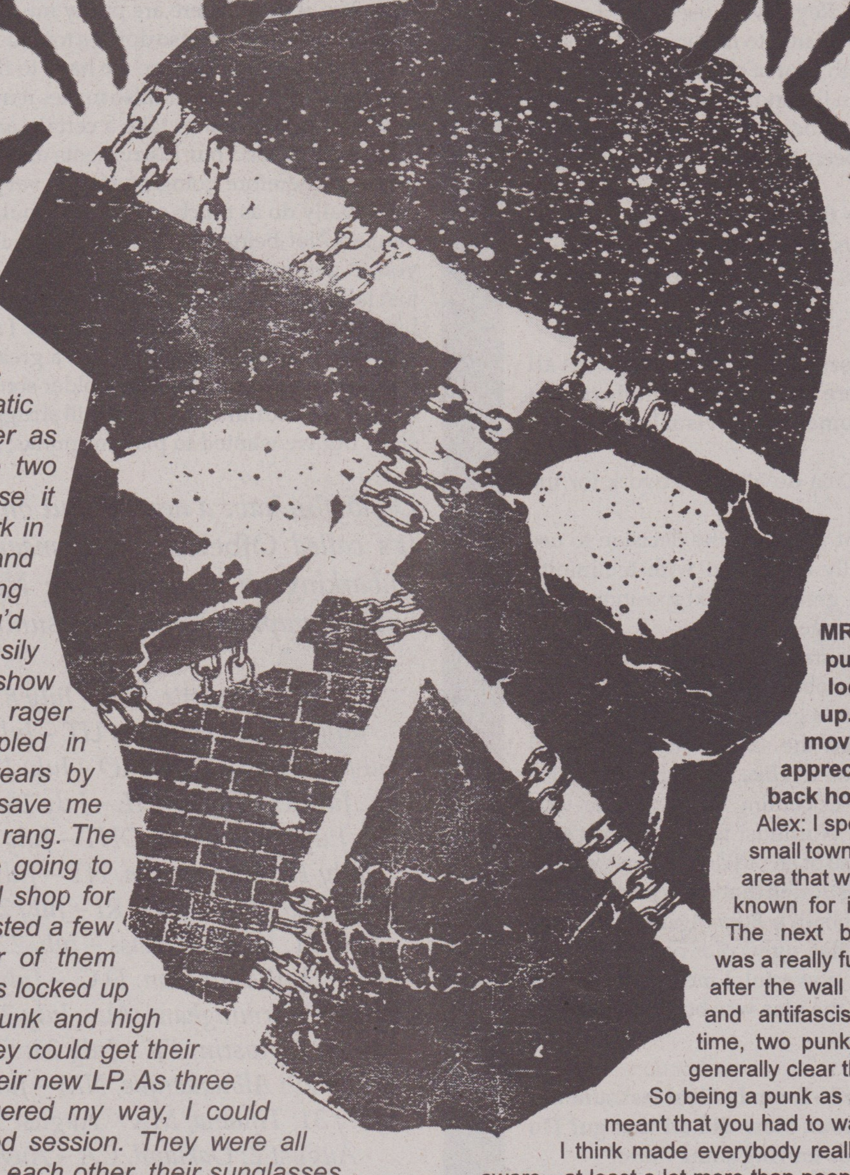
**MRR: Being located in Iceland must make it a little more complicated to tour right?**
Dísa: Yes, it does. There are pretty much no places to play shows outside the capital area so doing a tour just in Iceland is impossible. To get to mainland Europe we have to fly for at least three hours and traveling by airplane also makes it more complicated because you're only allowed to take a certain amount of stuff with you. We can't just load our instruments and backline in a van and go on tour. Therefore going on tour is very expensive for us so we can't really do as much of it as we would like.
Fannar: Not being able to really tour Iceland does kinda force you to get out there, though. Which is good. We were actually just talking about this at practice tonight. How we maybe had no business touring already last summer. I mean it was so much fun and I think people generally had a great time at our shows, but tonight we were playing some older songs and they were so easy to play. Last summer we were still struggling with the most basic stuff. But we wanted to play for punks, so we had to go.

*Dauðyflin have a new LP out on Iron Lung Records. It's called* Ofbeldi, *which means violence. They're embarking on a month-long North American tour with Olympia's Xylitol this summer.*

*July 7: Seattle, WA – July 8: Lewiston, ID*
*July 9: Salt Lake City, UT – July 10: Denver, CO*
*July 11: Kansas City, MO – July 12: Minneapolis, MN*
*July 13: Chicago, IL – July 14: Columbus, OH*
*July 15: Toronto, ONT – July 16: Detroit, MI*
*July 17: Binghamton, NY – July 18: Boston, MA*
*July 19: Providence, RI – July 20: New York, NY*
*July 21: Western Mass – July 22: Philadelphia, PA*
*July 23: Washington, D.C. – July 24: Asheville, NC*
*July 25: Birmingham, AL – July 26: New Orleans, LA*
*July 27: Austin, TX – July 28: Oklahoma City, OK*
*July 29: Albuquerque, NM – July 30: Tuscon, AZ*
*July 31: Tijuana, MX – August 1: Los Angeles, CA*
*August 2: Oakland, CA – August 3: Chico, CA*
*August 4: Portland, OR –August 5 & 6: Olympia, WA*



# LIFE FUCKER



*It was a sunny June Sunday in Berlin, 2016. I was coming down on the bench outside Static Shock Musik, hungover as fuck. I'd only had like two hours of sleep because it never actually gets dark in Berlin in the summer and was morosely weighing up my options—you'd be surprised how easily a Friday night punk show turns into a three-day rager that'll leave you crippled in a pool of your own tears by Monday morning. To save me from myself, my phone rang. The Life Fucker boys were going to meet me at the record shop for the interview I'd requested a few weeks back. The four of them had just spent 48 hours locked up in a studio, getting drunk and high on every substance they could get their hands on, recording their new LP. As three of them slowly swaggered my way, I could tell it had been a good session. They were all smiling and joking with each other, their sunglasses dark, their hats worn low, their faces weary but their hands still shaking from the Club Mate I'm sure they'd injected into their fingertips. Josh was, in Josh style, somewhere else. I'd spoken at length with each of them before, and every time was intrigued by their eloquence, and their way of thinking and talking about music and punk—something perhaps not entirely evident or expected when hearing their name or music. We spoke of the Berlin scene and how our generation has too many options, discussed the German paradigm and paradox, the importance of chemistry between band members, "dangerously cool" punks, techno and Italo disco, weed and speed and everything in between. Below is the end result of that hungover, two-hour conversation outside Iffi's shop. Featuring members of Drömdead, Diät, Sect, Blank Pages, Modern Pets, and more, ladies and germs, this is Life Fucker.*

***Interview and introduction by Lydia Athanasopoulou. Photos by Mike Champagne.***

**MRR: Tell us about what punk was like in your local scenes growing up. For some of you, did moving to Berlin make you appreciate some things from back home?**

Alex: I spent my teenage years in a small town in eastern Germany in an area that was, and still kind of is, well known for its amount of neo-Nazis. The next biggest city, Magdeburg, was a really fucked up place in the '90s after the wall came down—immigrants and antifascists got attacked all the time, two punks were killed and it was generally clear that you had to be careful. So being a punk as a scrawny teenager there meant that you had to watch your ass a lot, which I think made everybody really politically involved and aware—at least a lot more than people are in Berlin nowadays in the scene.

I had bands and did shows back then too, but everything was really hard and tedious because it didn't have the kind of infrastructure Berlin or other bigger cities in Germany have punk-wise, so coming to Berlin felt like a bit of a liberation, since you could just go to a show and you didn't have to put it on yourself.

Jan: My experience growing up in punk scenes in small towns and shitty south German cities is kind of similar to Alex's. Good times too, though! I miss that spirit of having to do everything by yourself and the amount of creativity that came along with this. Everything that punks did in these villages and small towns seemed way more unique,

energetic, anger-filled, and true than most of the stuff coming today out of all these punk metropolis, like Berlin, Barcelona, London, New York. It's so easy to be a freak and cool there, but where I'm from I feel like you had to have a reason to be a freak and you had to be really angry and passionate to even be ready to take on the amount of work you had to deliver to create a scene, or buy a record or do a radio show, run a punk house and whatever. Also, everything was way more diverse and people didn't have these "cool masks," doing everything right in their sub-sub-sub-scene—like "Perfect Punks." It was just all kinds of freaks coming together and building something. A lot of fights and weird shit, and a lot of disputes, but that's what kept people thinking and made it an active thing. Anyway, all of us are still involved in organizing things in Berlin, but for me this now seems so easy compared to where I'm from, where what Alex said about infrastructure also applies.

Kalo: I grew up in Caracas, Venezuela, one of the world's most violent cities. And of course this violence was also all over the scene. There were gangs and rivalries between them, fights at absolutely every show I ever went to, a lot of times stabbings while you were in the pogo trying to have fun. Being afraid of going out in the city looking like we did and having to look out for ourselves and our friends once we were at the show. Every place where we could have shows would shut down or ban shows from happening. People started giving up and the scene started decaying even more rapidly. Gladly, I was lucky to be able to leave the country and settle first in Barcelona and more recently in Berlin. I think there's nothing that can even be compared, the difference is tremendous in every single aspect.

**MRR: You've been involved in other bands with a different sound. What does Life Fucker mean to you? It's a hard Crass reference…**

Alex: I wouldn't say it necessarily means something in comparison to the other bands I have been involved in. I have always liked really simple punk bands, maybe that's why. The Crass reference is from "Asylum" off *The Feeding of the 5000*, which I got when I was fifteen, so all the lyrics have really stuck in my head. I am sure I used a lot of other references from that record unconsciously over the years.

Jan: My main background and social influence was definitely always what people call "DIY HC / punk" I guess (so yes, Crass when I was fifteen too). But I always tried to be involved in bands that sound deeply different to each other, because I like a lot of different music and I don't wanna be stuck in one stupid punk genre, because I think that punk is about progress and not about tradition. But who gives a damn about "punk" nowadays anyway? To me, Life Fucker

means playing the kind of raw hardcore punk I like and that reflects my environment the best, together with some of my best friends.

**MRR: I think it was Alex who told me he wanted to play caveman music; as he put it, "a conscious process of simplicity." What music, ideas or concepts influence your sound?**

Kalo: An unconscious process of ripping off other bands we've heard, ha ha. We just try to keep it simple and try to make it as noisy and loud as we can.

Jan: I would never call it "caveman music" and I think that's a horrible term, like seriously! I want to make music like elves would do. Angry elves though, psychotic heart and mind, broken and hopeless freaks with sticks and stones. Completely drunk and high on all kinds of drugs shortly before the nuclear Armageddon.

I will definitely spare you my talk about major influences but I love Robin Alvar from Piss, and I have an urgent need to shred as well! Besides that, I guess the average *MRR* reader doesn't need to read about obvious influences when it comes to a band that most people label as raw punk.

**MRR: You've been involved in the Berlin punk scene for a while now. How has it changed since you arrived? How are you involved?**

Alex: Berlin is a city with a high fluctuation of people, lots of comings and goings all the time, and this totally reflects on the scene as well. I have been living here for twelve years now and very few of the people I started putting shows on with in 2005–2006 are still involved in the whole circus. I feel like things have gotten a lot more hip in the last couple of years. I see people today at punk shows who would have never set foot into a dirty basement like Koma F ten years ago. I guess that's a good thing though, isn't it?

Another big tendency that I see is that people are way more into doing a lot of different kind of things, like going to a punk show an Friday and clubbing the next two days. Nobody that I know of would have done that a couple of years ago, and now it's completely normal to meet a handful of your punk friends somewhere in Berghain. I like it though. Makes for a more diverse and less incestuous climate when you're out partying.

**MRR: There are a lot of spaces to do shows in Berlin, which allows for micro-scenes to flourish. There is also an established electronic scene. How do all these interact with or influence punk?**

Jan: Yes, I think there's some part of interaction within all these micro-scenes. Some are interacting more, others are not at all, which can be okay...I guess when I moved here I was quite happy that I didn't have to deal with stupid, conservative Oi! skins, or any kind of macho acting hardcore guys. But it also makes you really comfortable in your own little bubble and doesn't really help when it comes to debates about critical topics within scenes, because if everyone is always on the same page what's there to discuss even?

Up to a certain point I think there's for sure an interaction between the electronic scene and parts of the punk scene. As Alex said before, it's quite likely you meet your punk friends on a Sunday at Berghain—and some acts definitely manage to create some overlap between the two sounds. Also, if you think about how the Berlin electronic scene started out in the late '80s, early '90s, it saw a lot of people that actually came out of the punk and post-punk / goth scene to start the whole electro thing. Events would happen in squats or abandoned places and there was, and in parts still is, some kind of the same vibe going when it comes to DIY and the way people organize things for example. There are a few good documentaries around this topic on YouTube...Check the one about the old Tresor (famous Berlin techno venue) or the book about Sven Marquardt (main doorman of Berghain), who was totally involved in the punk scene in the 1980s.

Kalo: I feel like people here are less self-conscious about what others will think or say if I play a different style or listen to different things than punk. A lot of the punks here enjoy techno and electronic music, dancing. It's a little bit freer in my opinion. I have been considering starting a project myself with more electronic influences.

**MRR: Do you think people coming and going in a transient city enhances or weakens a scene? It seems Berlin is wild but also wildly different to the rest of the country. After traveling a bunch and seeing other places, what do you wish there was more or less of in Berlin?**

Alex: It's hard to say. I guess it's more good than bad. It's true that Berlin is really different from the rest of the country but if you really look at it, a lot of it is really just make-up. The same kind of boring people that never do anything out of the ordinary just ride with the party wave in Berlin for a few years, do drugs and go wild and then disappear back into their bourgeois lives. Or even worse, try and have this bourgeois lifestyle in Berlin and raise the rents and make the city more boring. It seems like a lot of people think that it's just expected of them to loosen up a little. Of course, there are still a lot of freaks and life-artists here but I feel like in the next few years, we'll see less and less of people without steady jobs etc. in the inner-city, if rents keep climbing the way they have been.

Kalo: I have to say since the first time I came to Europe, Berlin was one of the most memorable cities, although I never expected to move here. I wouldn't compare it to other places, it's just so different everywhere. There is so much to do here, sometimes even too much to do. I'm still fascinated being here so far.

Josh: More fishing.

*Life Fucker will release an LP soon. Listen: lifefucker.bandcamp.com.*

# SIX TWO FIVE

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# FED UP FEST

*Interview and introduction by Micco Caporale. Photos by Vernon Hester and Mary Vallon.*

*When Fed Up Fest (FuF) began, it was just a ragtag group of queer and trans people trying to increase their visibility in the Chicago punk scene. Now in its fourth year, it's become a driving force for queercore in the United States. Organized by a rotating collective of queer and trans people, FuF is three days of bands, art, and workshops that uses queerness to confront capitalism and white supremacy. With a curated web presence and a burgeoning podcast, the fest is evolving into a multimedia experience that can be accessed the world over, all year long. I sat down with collective members E, Masha, Monkey, and Taylor to discuss the growing pains of being an explicitly political DIY fest while coming of age under social media's watchful eye. This year's Fed Up Fest takes place July 28–30th.*

**MRR: How do you incorporate your politics into the organizing of FuF? What are some of the challenges posed by a volunteer-run, queer, anti-capitalist, intersectional music fest?**

Monkey: Venue is an ongoing struggle because we have a lot of needs from a venue. We want it to be a space as many people as possible can feel comfortable at. We need it to be affordable, obviously. It also has to be accessible to all sorts of people. It has to be wheelchair accessible, close to public transit, and a place that can be talked about publicly—so, not in someone's basement. We want it to be a sober, all-ages space with gender-neutral bathrooms. There has to be enough space for bands, childcare, and tables. We've never had the ideal space, but we're making the most with what we have.

Masha: The fest also raises money for local groups that benefit the queer and trans community. When picking beneficiaries, we try to get a feel for, you know, "Are these people getting that rich white gay money?" If there's something about the way an organization runs their operations that pushes back against the non-profit industrial complex, or their relationship to capitalism is maybe a little... unexpected?—that encourages us to engage with them.

E: One thing I've been thinking about a lot is, when we throw benefit shows and plan the fest and solicit donations—a lot of this money is being solicited from queer and trans folks because that's who is super jazzed about the fest. It's the people who are coming because they feel most empowered—*but,* it creates this vortex because then we're giving that money to an organization that is potentially serving the exact people who donated. It's this weird cycle of money that I want to figure out how to break. I want people to be able to sustain themselves and for some other benefactor to come in. I want either some super rich gays to come in and, like, be our sugar parents, or some awesome straight cis people to come in and give us a bunch of money. Otherwise, it just feels like we're constantly pouring our own money into the services that we're then going to be receiving. Which is... kind of draining and sad to think about.

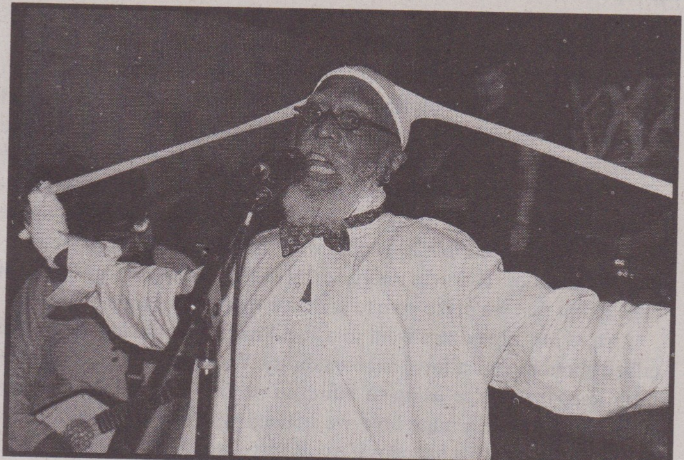
**MRR: What are some advantages to organizing FuF as a collective?**

E: One big advantage is that it offers a lot of folks the opportunity to build a skill set that is often denied to queer and trans folks. Booking and playing music, building a budget, creating a website, doing social media, putting on a huge event—there are just so many parts that go into the fest. Even if folks don't stay part of the collective, they could maybe go start another fest or lend these skills to building up some other hustle in their lives. It's just one more way of empowering folks.

**MRR: FuF was inspired by FED UP QUEERS (FUQ), a direct-action collective in New York City that operated from 1989–1990. Much of what FUQ focused on was specific to NYC. Do you think FuF addresses any uniquely Midwestern concerns?**

Masha: The coasts have so much visibility and so much cultural power, especially amongst queer and trans folks. I remember when a comrade created a poster that says, "Go gay without moving to the Bay," and the online controversy that that thing sparked was remarkable. Because there's this whole notion that, like, "Well, I'm queer, and the Midwest isn't safe for me." I don't want to judge anybody or say that that sentiment is wrong because safety is so personal, but there is so much resistance and so many projects here in the Midwest. Chicago (and Illinois in general) is, in many ways, a very "liberal" place, which is supposed to be better for queers and trans folks, which is very mystifying. We're trying to

CORE FEST



BLACK WIDOW

carve out space in the punk and hardcore world here, but we're also like, "This is a thing that is taking space for the Midwest."

**MRR: Tell me about the FuF podcast, *Queer Cafeteria*. How does it complement the fest?**

Masha: The idea for *Queer Cafeteria* came from acknowledging, like, "Whoa! This collective and this fest is processing really important shit that is relevant for people who organize public events!" I'm really obsessed with audio projects and podcasts, so I just woke up one morning and was like, "Oh my god! It's perfect! This is how we have this public conversation or help people learn from our organizing!" Also, there aren't a lot of queer presence in the podcast world—and definitely not a lot of anti-capitalist or critical of the state podcasts.

Taylor: *Queer Cafeteria* is like a mini-stage for folks who might not be in a band or have a workshop to share where they're at. The fest has folks who are awesome, high-profile folks or folks who know a lot about something, but there are also folks just existing in the world who are queer or trans or survivors of abuse or folks of color who need a stage.

**MRR: Some people have attempted arguing that events which elevate marginalized voices are just a form of self-segregation. How do you respond to these arguments?**

Monkey: I think it comes from a place of ignorance and privilege to say that these fests are promoting some sort of segregation. These events are put on because *our* voices are marginalized in this society. The only way you could believe that this is self-segregation is if you think we're all on a common playing field, and we're not. We just want to be heard. We want to be visible, and we have to fight to be visible. It's not just given to us. If a bunch of punks were to put on a fest that highlights white voices, it would be a totally different story because those are the dominant voices in society.

Taylor: We're not forcibly marginalizing other people. We're not forcibly marginalizing ourselves. That doesn't make any sense. They're totally welcome to come and give us their money and actually see queer and trans artists perform and support them. We're not saying, you (random, straight, cis, probably-white person who's saying this online) can't come. You're more than welcome.

E: I also think that they're misunderstanding what segregation means, and they actually mean separatism. I want to clarify that separatism is totally fine. Like, queer separatism is a thing, FuF is not a queer separatist space, but queer separatism is totally legitimate.

**MRR: Being committed to a political mission is a big undertaking. How do you hold yourselves accountable when people recognize room for improvement? Are all criticisms treated equally, and if not, how do you decide which ones to engage?**

Monkey: In our first year, we received some criticism that the fest organizers were all white and cis—specifically, some of the members of the collective were actually straight, cis people. All of those were wrong, and I feel like, often times, when people of color are involved in organizing things that are not explicitly about PoC struggles, even though they may be intersectional, there's a tendency for others to whitewash and make this assumption that this is an all-white organizing group. It felt like our backgrounds and cultures were erased. I'm sure there are people who continue to believe that or spread that about us, and that's fucked up.

Masha: The majority of the critiques that we've gotten have been useful and add to the complexity of creating a space where people feel like themselves and feel seen and free and all of these things that we aspire to. I think our track record of addressing critique in public ways on social media has been good, too. For example, we got an excellent critique from someone who pointed out the ways in which a space that we called accessible to people with different mobility limitations was actually not. That was really, really useful and is now a prominent checkpoint that we make sure to address when we set up the space.

Also, a few organizers went to a Just Practice workshop series that talked about organizational accountability. We got a lot of information from that, that we're using to build up on our Community of Care statement because a huge hole we noticed was that we didn't really have a policy for what happens if a collective member gets called out or called in for whatever reason. We also didn't really have clear policies on if, say, our Facebook feed starts blowing up. A communication policy and an internal accountability policy is something we've been working on this year.

E: I get the impression that folks think we can do a lot more than we actually can. I think people actually believe we have more power than we do to address larger systemic issues and issues within our scenes. I don't want to blow this off like it's just a fest, but we are working so hard to put this fest on, and it feels a lot of the time like that gets overlooked. We are just a half a dozen to a dozen people at max, working on all volunteer labor, trying really hard to sustain ourselves in our daily lives as queer and trans people with other intersecting identities, and yet the fest is held to this level of scrutiny that we just can't sometimes keep up with. We can't do everything.

**MRR: Has being on the receiving end of some callouts informed your opinion on callout culture at all? Do you think callouts are an effective tool for social change, and if so, when and how should they be applied?**

E: A lot of how people characterize accountability comes from social media or how we communicate because of social media and technology—you know, texting and all these far more removed kinds of communication that make it really easy for people to put things out more anonymously or to step away once they've made a critique. That really doesn't allow for dialogue or more open, honest, direct communication. I am definitely not opposed to receiving critiques. I think we're really explicit that, as a fest and a collective, we want that. But the manner in which I think we're being socialized to do that is actually incredibly very anonymizing and very indirect and destructive.

Taylor: With some of the critiques we've gotten—and with callout culture in general—it seems like the response folks want is that we shouldn't exist. We face normative, apolitical folks critiquing us for just trying to be political, and then we also face other folks who are trying to be political, for not being political in the right way. And it seems like the response folks want is not that we should do something as best we can; it's that we shouldn't exist. My response wants to be, "If you think you can do better, go start your own fest." There's turnover in the collective from having to deal with all of these unhelpful critiques and callouts. It gets draining when you're already constantly struggling against giant systems of oppression, and then people bombard us with all this other stuff. It's like, "Why am I even doing this?"

**MRR: How do you avoid burnout while organizing?**

E: There's so much pressure to just be constantly productive in our society, and I think even within activist and radical scenes, there's this idea that you need to be productive and active, and if you're not, it's some kind of weird FOMO. If folks are getting burnt out, that needs to be okay and validated, and people should take time and space for themselves to recharge. I think what has been asked of folks, or what folks in the collective have done in the past, is make that explicit. I want it to be okay for people to be up front about burnout.

Monkey: I'm straddling the line right now between being burned out and being inspired or hopeful enough to keep going. But seeing how inspiring this fest is for others and seeing the emotions elicited from others when they're at the fest or right after is so uplifting and inspiring. It just...it feels good.

**MRR: How will you know when FuF has run its course?**

E: It's okay for organizations to die or to transform. It's okay for them to not exist anymore or to take a hiatus. It doesn't mean that they failed. I do think that FuF has a lot of missions. Some of them could exist in different ways. For me personally, single-issue fests have started to feel a little stagnant. I think of Intersect Fest that happened last year as an example of how it's possible to raise up many different marginalized identities in one fest and acknowledge that, although we are not all marginalized in the same way, it's possible to fight alongside each other. Which is not to say that holding space for individual identity categories is in any way divisive because I think FuF is super important to specifically look at queer and trans folks in punk. But I think that, because those aren't the only identity categories people hold, it's important to acknowledge the intersecting identities we all have.

Taylor: Until all of the cis and straight people show up to FuF and white folks show up to Black and Brown or give them their money and prioritize that as much as they prioritize a band of all cis straight white dudes playing bro-y hardcore music, then I feel like FuF can keep existing.

**MRR: What kinds of projects do you hope FuF inspires, and how can people who travel to FuF take that experience back to their hometown?**

Monkey: There should be a queer fest in every city. Everywhere! Everything should be queer. I think it'd be great if people were inspired enough to completely dismantle and destroy transphobia and homophobia and patriarchy and racism and capitalism. That would be wonderful. Other than that, just inspiring people to get out and have their voices heard and to start booking more intersectional punk shows and punk fests. Also to make more friends and be our friends.

E: My first time at FuF made me feel like there was this magical space for three days where I didn't have to feel afraid and anxious and terrible and I could cry all these happy tears while I was there because it was just so wonderful. I hope that people get this utopian vision from it, even if it's not perfect.

Taylor: The entire world could be like that. I hope FuF gives people something to work towards.

*To learn more about Fed Up Fest, check out fedupfestchicago.com or email the collective at chicagoqueercore@gmail.com.*

*Legendary Japanese punk Kawakami passed away on June 5, 2007. The reverberations of the style of D-beat raw punk that he made famous can still be felt and heard today. Many the world over miss both him and Disclose very much. I always wondered what other members of Disclose had to say about the band. I have been very fortunate to chat with Hiro the Aggression about his dear friend and bandmate Kawakami, and his continued involvement in punk and hardcore.*

*Interview and introduction by Sean J. Photos provided by Hiro. Interview translated by Dana Berte.*

**MRR: How did you become involved with Disclose?**
This is going to get a bit long but I'll try to explain. I lived in Japan on an island Shikoku, in a city right in the central part of Kochi Prefecture. At the time, Kawakami was living in Morocco City, about two hours by car from the center of Kochi Prefecture, and at time he was playing in band called Dehumanization. I think this was around 1990. At that time I was the bassist in the band called Insane Youth. Kawakami moved from Morocco to Kochi City and continued working with Dehumanization, but he ended up far away from where his other band members were living, and they were often unable to make it to the studio rehearsals, and live performances that Kawakami wanted them to do. So, myself and the drummer from Insane Youth, Doi (listed as "AKI" on the Disclose album *Tragedy* and other releases) took turns helping out. It was around this time that he changed the band's name from Dehumanization to Disclose. Disclose's first demo tape (*Crime*) was recorded with members from Morocco.

In early '90s, Kawakami also sometimes did vocals for Insane Youth. Kawakami was the vocalist for both on the *Kochi City Hardcore* Disclose / Insane Youth 7" split EP that was released around them.

After that recording, I started to drum for Disclose pretty frequently. Early Disclose 7" EPs that list the drummer as "Hiro" are all referring to me.

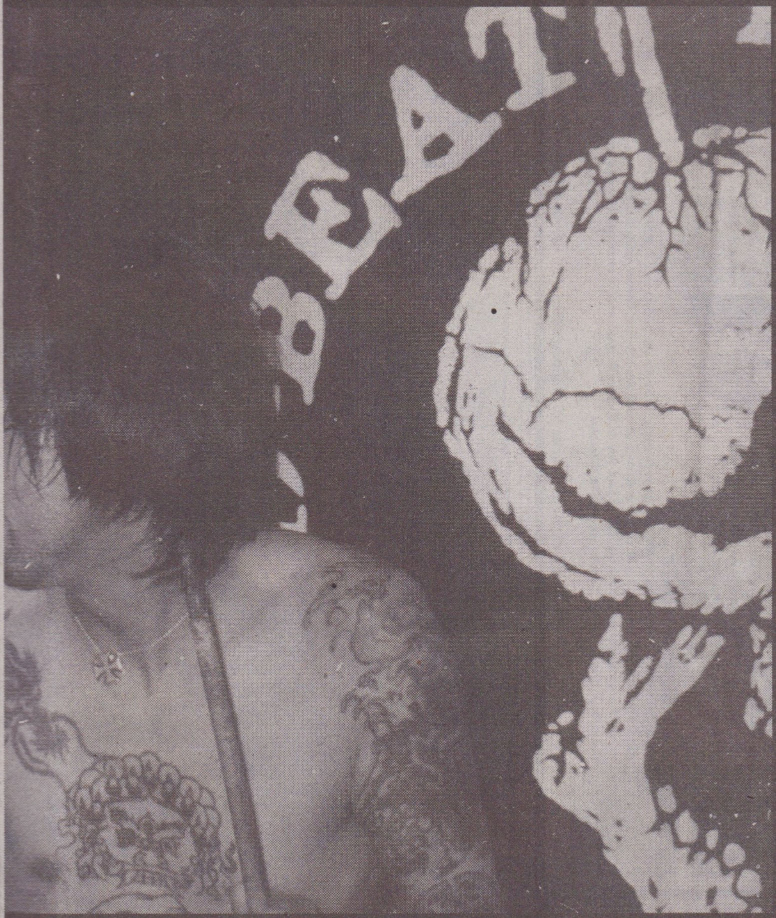
**MRR: Why did you leave Disclose in the '90s?**
From the start, I joined Disclose as a support member. There were several other supporting members, and when Kawakami needed help for a show or a recording, I joined on drums or sometimes even on bass.

In the '90s, Uo-Kato joined as the full-time drummer, and from then on, I focused on my own band until Kawakami needed a hand again. Uo-Kato had no band experience at that point, so I taught him the basics of D-beat. Since Disclose wasn't looking for any more technique than necessary, Uo-Kato might have been Kawakami's ideal drummer until he quit. Insane Youth broke up in 1995 or 1996, and I formed the band Aggression soon after that. I am still playing in that band.

The other members of Insane Youth went to form the band Forward along with other members from the Tokyo band Death Side who also broke up around the same time, but since then, Doi (Aki) quit Forward and has returned to his family to work in farming. He drums at shows every so often, but I really hope that he'll form a new band of his own. Souichi, who was the guitarist for Insane Youth, is still playing in Forward and is also active as guitarist for G.I.S.M. He also played in Gudon before we started Insane Youth. He has also played in several other bands. He's one of Japan's great guitarists. He is *the man.*

**MRR: Bacteria and Cranks didn't record much music—why?**
Bacteria was just me and Kawakami playing around and recording whatever came to mind on the MTR tape recorder I had bought, since we'd been listing to hardcore like Sore Throat, Anal Cunt, and Seven Minutes of Nausea. All of those songs were recorded in my apartment. I created the songs with a drum machine and a guitar, and Kawakami added the vocals. For the Cranks, we had been listening to things like Blanks 77, pogo punk and '77 style punk from around then, like Defiance and the Casualties, and thought "hey, we could do this!" and decided to do a recording.

The Cranks were formed by friends we hung out with a lot back then, with Kawakami on vocals and Fukugawa on guitar, Kazou



(ex-U.G. Man) on bass, and myself on drums. We started these two bands for fun.

**MRR: Why did you rejoin Disclose?**
The bassist Fukugawa quit Disclose, and a guy named Will joined Disclose and things seemed to be going for a while but he also quit. The Abe (the guitarist currently playing with Tokyo band Life) joined as a support bassist, and Disclose went on its first American tour. But when they got back Uo-Kato quit, so I joined as support drummer again. Then, following Will, MASABIENTDOOM (Masa) became Disclose's bassist.

Around that time, my written name changed from Hiro to Hiro the Aggression. I think this was out of Kawakami's consideration for my band.

**MRR: What did you think about Disclose's sound?**
At the very beginning, I think the Disclose sound was a little too close to Discharge and Doom, and of course also E.N.T. and Discard. After Fukugawa joined on bass, the sound changed to what we think of as D-beat raw punk. The song composition was similar to that of Discharge, the guitar sound emulated Bones, and Disclose's overall sound was that of 1980s D-beat band from Sweden or Finland. This was not the stereo sound of advanced recording technology, but a reproduction sound heard on cassette tapes, this component sound foundation of "raw punk."

**MRR: What were the pros and cons of being a member of Disclose?**
There were so many good things, I couldn't possibly write them all here. There were no bad aspects. I'm truly sad that I can't create any more songs with Kawakami or play any more shows anywhere. He was really *the man*!

Disclose and Kawakami's friends' bands, and bands that were influenced by Disclose gather once a year in various parts of Japan in memory of Kawakami. I think it's really a great thing. I think it'd be great if anyone who likes and respects the punk music made by Disclose and Kawakami put on "Kawakami Forever" gigs in their area, like KAWAKAMI FOREVER USA, KAWAKAMI FOREVER AUSTRALIA, KAWAKAMI FOREVER MALAYSIA, etc.

I think it's fine for these shows to be really small. Even at small events, as long as punk bands get together and people get to enjoy punk rock, it doesn't matter if there are ten or one hundred people.

**MRR: Kawakami's mom seems like a very cool person. Japanese punks seem to really like her. Does she like punk?**
Kawakami's mother is a really nice person. And I do think she like punks, too. However, it's not OK to be rude even if you are a punk. And it's also not OK to ask for all kinds of Disclose stuff just because Kawakami's mom is nice. I'd like for people to stop doing that. It's OK to use Disclose artwork for t-shirts and patches, but do not use or sell Disclose recordings without permission!

**MRR: What bands have you played in after Disclose?**
I've been active in the band Aggression ever since Insane Youth broke up. Members have come and gone, and we've had some long breaks and inactive periods, but I'm still making music with Aggression now, and will do continue to do in the future.

When people talk about Disclose, it's always all about Kawakami, but I've been active this whole time. Most previous members of Disclose have moved away from making music, and some have even stopped being punk, but I certainly don't plan on retiring.

At aggression-punk.bandcamp.com you can hear songs that are not sold by any record label, and different variations of other songs too. I think we'll be adding as we record more new songs.

**MRR: What has your life been like since Disclose?**
My life before and after Disclose is the same the whole way through. I love punk rock, I live as a punk and all I do is continue to play with my band Aggression, no matter what happens.

# KAWAKAMI FOREVER

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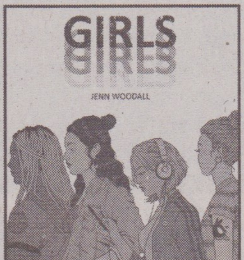

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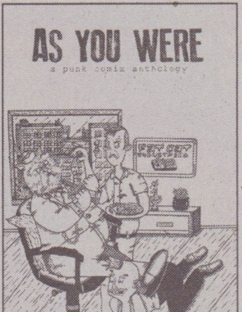

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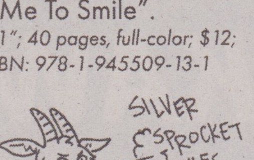


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*Interview and introduction by Arielle Burgdorf. Photos courtesy of the filmmaker.*

# Exotic

*Years before we became friends, I got to know KC Oden through her documentary about women in the punk scene,* From the Back of the Room. *I watched it in a packed theater at the International House in Philadelphia, impressed that she spent equal time interviewing my friends and famous heavyweights like Kathleen Hanna and Alison Wolfe. When I moved back to D.C. I got to know her as the bassist in queercore outfit Homosuperior and one of the hardest working filmmakers around, completely dedicated to her DIY punk roots.*

*Her latest film,* Exotic, *tells the history of sex workers' global struggle for rights and humane treatment through the lens of exotic dancers working in Guam. A desirable destination in the international sex worker community, Guam represents a tempting promise for outsiders with little to no work permits needed, plane tickets for workers funded by clubs, a tropical climate, and preferential treatment, especially for white dancers.*

*Yet the rewards of working in Guam often prove deceptive and dancers end up in precarious positions far from home, occupying a legal gray area, unable to go to police when they experience violence, and trapped in debt from hidden "extras."* Exotic *gives us a wide range of perspectives from the dancers themselves, government officials, academics, and organizers. More than just a documentary,* Exotic *is a jumping off point for discussion, interrogating regional and global dynamics of capital, race, and sex. Here's what KC had to say about her work.*

**MRR: How did this project come about? Why Guam?**

The idea for this project was kind of abrupt and Guam-specific, actually. I was with a good friend on a screening tour for my last film, and she mentioned she might take a contract to dance in Guam. I started peppering her with questions that turned into the film. It wasn't long before I was connecting with other women who had gone, figuring out how to get over to the island, etc.

I circulated a Kickstarter off the mailing list and FB following I created from touring on the last film, and that's how I got over there the first time. I was there for about a month, and by the time I got to the island, I connected with a few dancers, two folks in club management, a professor, and a journalist who were all connected to the industry. From there it was kind of an intuitive process (which I think journalism often is) of connecting with more people, and having conversations.

One of my connections was a professor of gender studies at the University of Guam, and she eventually asked me if I could take her course-load while she went back to the UK on sabbatical for a semester (she's in the film—Helen!). I agreed, and I got an "angel donor," who I didn't know previously, but who generously offered to "invest in women in the arts" by paying for my second plane ticket there. Tickets are about $2500, so that was a huge help.

The second time I was in Guam I stayed for about half a year, and I worked part time at the university, lived in student housing, and worked nights / weekends on the film. I had a lot more time to devote to the film then, which was great. I lived with a grad student who was studying geology and meteorology (she spent a lot of time spelunking, no joke), and I met a lot of wild marine biologists through school, too.

**MRR: Give us just some brief background history on Guam, for readers who might not know about it.**

The layers of militarized and colonial history on Guam have shaped the culture on the island in a unique way. Lots of groups collide there—Japanese tourists, American military, indigenous folks—and there is a lot of historical resentment and oppression.

Currently, Guam is a "United States territory" that is situated similarly (in terms of legality, relationship with the federal government, etc.) to Puerto Rico. It has its own local government, and is subject to U.S. federal laws, but doesn't have voting representatives in Congress. It was colonized originally by the Spanish, after Magellan "discovered" it in the late 1400s. Guam's culture now has a heavy Spanish colonial influence, although it was designated as a United States territory after the Spanish-American war. Guam was occupied by Japanese forces during World War Two, during several infamously bloody years. It has been under American control since.

**MRR: Definitely a lot of issues to unpack! What were your thoughts on how the racism and colonialism intersected? I also was really curious about what the Korean "Mama-sans" who ran the clubs had to say about their experiences. Did you try to talk with any of them or were they unavailable?**

None of them wanted to appear on-camera! Also, I was a lot more light-handed about the idea of interviewing anyone in a "management" role after having some negative experiences with strip clubs—asking managers to talk to me and then getting shut out of an entire club as a result—so I decided to focus mostly on the workers. However, even the mamas I built relationships with weren't interested, although a few talked to me about their experiences running businesses off the record.

There are gradations of racism and colonialism that influence how everyone in this industry is treated, absolutely. That's the most succinct way to put it, I suppose, but the fact that price points are so explicitly tied to physical appearance probably makes it a bit more visible. White, English-speaking blond women, for instance, make the most money in strip clubs on the island, because Japanese tourists and military are both interested in them, but for different reasons...

Also, it's worth mentioning that a lot of managers I spoke with were former workers. I think that's a common phenomenon across any economic sector, though.

**MRR: How did clubs figure out that they can charge girls rent and then can exercise a lot of control over their lives?**

The business model for strip clubs in the mainland United States was turned into a tip / contractor model by these club owners called the Mitchell Brothers, who started charging pay-to-play "house fees" in the '90s. One of the things that makes Guam an enticing destination for workers is that there aren't stage fees at the clubs there, and dancers are paid an hourly wage. I'm not sure how transportation and housing are factored into contracts for traveling dancers in other parts of the country, but in Guam all that money is fronted and then taken out of the paycheck.

The contracts in Guam are for seventy-eight working days, over three months (no coincidence, I think, that these contracts are for a similar period of time as a tourist visa). So, out of ninety days, that leaves twelve days off. Since most dancers in the mainland are contractors, they're used to a lot of schedule flexibility, which doesn't exist in Guam. I can't speak for them, but I think management feels that if they've invested in a worker via all this overhead, they want them to be dependable (read: profitable) as an employee. They also fine workers for "code" violations, like showing up late, not having an impeccable pedicure, etc. They're leveraging what control they can exert, financially. Really, in any context, capitalism finds new ways to squeeze working people.

**MRR: There's a really great moment in *Exotic* where Annie Sprinkle notes that "the government is the biggest pimp."**

The larger quote from her was about the government making money through infiltrating and raiding clubs. Obviously the government benefits financially from activities like this, and these efforts involve forming ultimately disingenuous relationships with a lot of workers, which is bullshit.

We live in a puritanical and draconian country, and I think it's important to know that this is the context that keeps sex workers from being an entitled or protected class. To the American government, protecting sex workers is not a priority, just like it's not a priority to protect any marginalized group here. This country wasn't built with our interests in mind, and we do well to remind ourselves of that, whether we want to fight within or outside of "the system."

**MRR: Did you run into any issues of protection of identity / anonymity? I noticed lots of shots of floors, dancers wearing sunglasses, etc. Was that more for comfort or were you risking legal complications? People were also seen warning you on camera, was there ever a chance of danger while filming?**

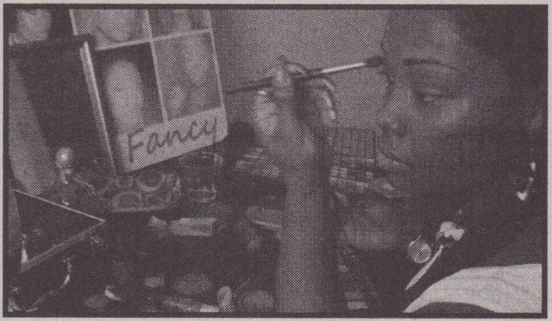
I tried to pick b-roll of the clubs that was as anonymous as possible, to avoid violating worker privacy. Also I let dancers wear shades if it made them more comfortable. It's kind of a no-no in terms of production-value, but I make the rules when I'm doing it myself and I'm more interested in making folks feel like they can be open than I am seeing their eyes on camera.

In terms of general safety, strip clubs and karaoke bars by and large felt very "safe" to me, but there were a few times I felt like filming or being in certain places might be a bit dangerous, yes. There are some folks who have discussed massage parlors as a front for mafia activity—and I will say it's eerie that whenever a business is shut down, a new one opens almost immediately. Really, though, the danger element for me specifically (a white woman who speaks English) in these venues is comparatively small.

**MRR: What do you hope viewers take away from the film?**

I hope the film at least forces people to think beyond the narrative that someone is either "empowered" (read: someone with agency who can be criminalized or demonized) or a "victim" (read: someone without agency, who can be saved); that's what I'm interested in bringing to the table. There are often huge blind spots in the ways that sex work gets talked about, and forcing people into binary categories is a problematic thing we love to do in the United States.

I believe decriminalization and harm reduction are the first steps towards approaching the whole industry in a more compassionate and less carceral way, and seeing people's faces helps folks humanize the issue. Sex workers are people, and our options as human beings within a patriarchal capitalist system are limited. If decriminalization were possible, it would be easier for workers to come to the police for help if they needed it, but I have to say I don't begrudge anyone for distrusting the cops. Decriminalization would also make it easier for NGOs to do classic harm reduction things like distribute free condoms, or offer free testing for workers, or for workers to write more things off on their taxes! Better coordination or communication between workers would also be possible if sex work was decriminalized, and, of course, workers could also leverage legal protection and support against unfair labor practices, bosses or clients.




**MRR: Can you talk a little about how you chose songs for the soundtrack?**
I just made a list of "moods" I needed music for, actually, and put out a call on Facebook. I have a lot of buds in various music scenes, so it wasn't long before I had all the stuff I needed. Big ups to Amos and Tenement for their super generous donation of a bunch of tracks off of *Predatory Headlights*, as well as Andy from Thou, and many others!

**MRR: Are there other filmmakers whose work inspired *Exotic* or who you feel you're working in the same tradition as?**
Sure, of course! *Live Nude Girls UNITE!* is a great documentary about a unionizing effort at the Lusty Lady strip club in San Francisco. Also *Whores' Glory* was pretty interesting, but more editorial. I watch a lot of sociopolitical docs—there are so many!

I'm also really interested in books on the topic. Laura Augustin's *Sex at the Margins* was really good, I thought, and a book called *Global Sex Workers* by Kamala Kempadoo and Jo Doezema was great. Also *Lydia's Open Door* by Patty Kelly, and *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases*, by Cynthia Enloe.

I recently saw a movie called *Paradise Love* that addresses the prevalence of European sex tourism and male workers in Africa, which was pretty well done. There's a book called *Hello My Big Big Honey!* by Richard Ehrlich, which is a compilation of love letters from mostly European men to women they'd met working in Bangkok.

**MRR: *Exotic* came several years after your last film *From the Back of the Room*. How do you feel you've changed as a filmmaker since then?**
I've become more broadly interested / engaged with sociological and political issues, and certainly more attuned to the ways that production work is imbued with emotional labor. I think often about the ways I approach the people that I film, and the strange and very specific bond that it can produce. There's a great documentary called *Cameraperson* about the cinematographer Kirsten Johnson that discusses these issues, which really resonated with me.

Also, I'd like to think my shooting and editing has gotten better!

**MRR: How has critical reception been to *Exotic* so far? What are your future plans for the doc and general life?**
The sex worker-led orgs I've worked with to do screenings (please contact me if you're reading this!) have all been really receptive, so that tells me I'm doing the right thing, in my opinion. Academics have been interested also, which is cool. Punks, not as much, which is a bummer, 'cause aren't we supposed to be engaged politically? I could wax intellectual about larger trends in punk consciousness, but I'll leave it at that.

I was lucky enough to land a day job that enables me to do documentary work at the Maryland PBS affiliate, MPT, so keep your eyes out for any of their digital studios stuff, 'cause that's mine. I did a bunch of short docs around the uprising in Baltimore, and a few on the opioid epidemic. Now I'm working on some pieces about fracking. I've become more invested in the process of researching a huge issue and trying to break it into chunks. So many of these things are like onions, you know?

In my free time I've been volunteering to do more fun video stuff, like shooting music videos for friends (this queerdo dream-pop band Maxine and I are going to be working on one together this spring, so I'm stoked about that). I'm getting better at making stained glass and lino cuts, and I've been writing some music with pals (including Homosuperior), and planning tour(s). Folks should hit me up if they want to organize *Exotic* screenings!

*Watch a trailer and find out more about the film at exoticdocumentary.com. KC and* Exotic *are embarking on a short screening tour this month:*

*June 11th in Chicago, IL at the Leather Archives & Museum*
*June 12th in Milwaukee, WI at the Cactus Club*
*June 13th in Madison, WI at Art In*
*June 15th at the Draw in Appleton, WI*
*June 17th at Underground Cinema by WVIFF in Charleston, WV*
*July 1st & 2nd in Albuquerque, NM at Guild Cinema*

**MRR: How did Reptilians from Andromeda form?**

Aybike: Everything started with Tolga and me, before we married. We had been jamming at home with our friends for fun in early 2013.

Tolga: We had underground backgrounds and began to record experimental instrumental tracks with Aybike and make video collages for them under the name "Solar Chaos." We released an album with a Canadian record label called *Fuck Yr Body Up*. After that, Aybike wrote some lyrics and we recorded four songs on a holiday trip. It was our family fun at the beginning. We changed our name to Reptilians from Andromeda and we got good feedback from some US labels after we uploaded our songs to Soundcloud. We released four EPs and an album in just three months. Everything was so fast.

There was so much interest around Reptilians from Andromeda playing live, so we decided to find a drummer and bass player to carry our music onstage.

**MRR: For the readers who are not familiar with the band, please tell us: who are the Reptilians from Andromeda? Where does the name come from?**

Aybike: We love B-movies. The name came from the movie *The Reptile* (1966), a great movie which we recommend strongly! We also once looked at nebula and galaxy photos and decided that the Andromeda Galaxy was for us!

Tolga: You know, the world is ruled by an evil power and behind this power there are reptilians who came from Andromeda. Shapeshifting guys!

**MRR: Reptilians from Andromeda's sound consists of garage rock, no wave, post-punk, deathrock, and indie rock. Are there any bands that you were especially influenced by when you started making music as Reptilians from Andromeda?**

Aybike: I think we all love David Bowie, Lou Reed, Iggy Pop, the Cramps and Sonic Youth. These are foundation stones for us.

But, personally, I love Nico and Nina Hagen so much. Nina Hagen changed something in the music industry with her amazing style, videos and performances. Also, Nico has a dreamy and powerful voice that sounds like it came from a parallel universe.

Tolga: Basically, punk is the main influence on me. I played for more than twenty years in the punk scene, and I listened heavily to related genres like hardcore, post-punk, new wave, no wave, garage, surf, goth, and anarcho-punk! Favorite artists of mine are Stooges, T-Rex, Velvet Underground, the New York Dolls, Suicide, Bowie, MC5, Television, Keith Levene, Slits, Wire, Siouxsie and the Banshees, Chrome, Wipers, Davie Allan and the Arrows, Peter Hammill, Howard Roberts, Flipper, DNA, Sonic Youth, Pixies, Jesus Lizard, Big Black, Slint, Low, Spell, Fall, Bauhaus, Honeymoon Killers, Gang of Four, Kino, Pere Ubu, Earth, and more.

**MRR: Since the self-titled EP on Dead Plant Records in 2013, the band released four EPs and the full-length album *Whatever* on Illuminated Paths in 2016. In a DIY style you write and produce your music with vintage instruments and record using four-track, reel-to-reel, analog guitar effect pedals, vintage microphones, old radios for noise, theremins and vintage drum machines, and rhythm boxes. Please tell us more about how the songs come up and your way of working.**

Aybike: We still believe in analog recording and luckily we have equipment, and we love to be lo-fi which makes our sounds so vintage and intense!

Tolga: I was in DIY punk band when I was young in the '90s. I had a distro, I released demos, compilations, splits, made fanzines, concert posters and flyers, stickers, and stencils. I organized gigs for my band and others, like some foreign bands who came to Turkey. I learned lots of things from DIY. Now I can produce our recordings at home, and I can release them quickly online in order to promote myself. So DIY philosophy makes us independent as a band. We are free to express ourselves without any boundaries.

I have worked with big record labels and had a mainstream audience in the past but being free is something special and I don't want to lose it with Reptilians from Andromeda. DIY is a great ethic which makes people stronger to express themselves in art. We are a lo-fi garage rock band, but it's not about inability; contrarily, it's our choice to play and record like this. We love background noises, feedback, deep sound sizzles, etc…We want to create music with the energy of punk and garage with some noisy, experimental elements. It's a kind of noise and pop sound mixed together. And we love to use cheap, old, bad, and weird equipment because we believe they give our music its soul. We use different techniques in every session; sometimes we open a staticky radio signal and record on it.

**MRR: Tolga you were a former member of the Turkish punk rock band Rashit which had been around since the '90s. How do you see the punk rock scene in Turkey today, compared to the 90s?**

*Reptilians from A*
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*Interview and introduct*

# REPTILIANS FRO

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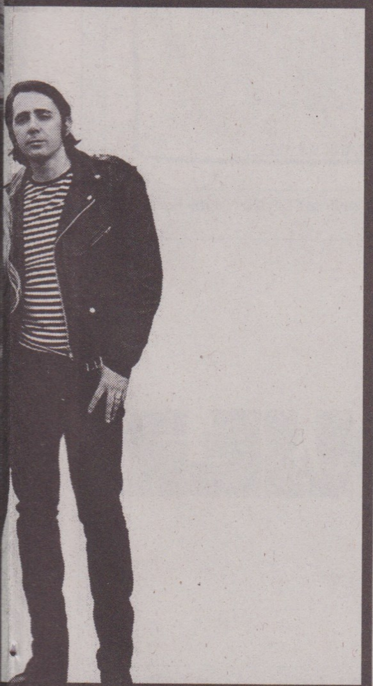

Tolga: I've played for 20 years with my band Rashit. We released the first official punk rock album in Turkey *Telasa Mahal Yok* from Kod Music. We have released too much stuff from many different labels: five DIY tapes, five albums (cd / cassette), three split tapes with Active Minds / Third World Planet / Flagrants d'Eli, a split 7" with Ask it Why, a 7" EP called *Taksimde Bangyjumping*, and a LP called *Kapak Guzelleri*, and we have given too many songs to compilation albums all over the world.

After 20 years we decided to take a break. The world is changed, music is changed. Attitudes are just fashions mow. People don't give any attention to concerts anymore. There is not something we can call a scene nowadays. So it's getting bitter to play to normal people not to punks. People coming to our shows just look at us. I am getting depressed at the concerts at the end. There is no point to making music like that. And also forming this new band with my lovely wife Aybike makes me feel like I'm back at my old school roots.

There was a strong underground punk movement in the '90s, but now it's hard to tell what the scene is. There are just a few bands around and it seems like the Internet has mostly killed the friendships and the collective mind. Everybody lives in an independent solitude. You should check these names for good music: She Past Away (goth), the Raws (garage), Robotat (surf), and Tampon ('77 punk). I helped the Czech record label Prof Sny to compile this great *Istanbul Street Trash* compilation LP. You can check it out if you want to hear today's Turkish deep underground. Istanbul always has an amazing dynamic, especially from the beginning of the '90s 'til Occupy Taksim Square in 2013. The city has evolved, but after Occupy, the government began to believe that all kinds of alternative youth movements were a threat to themselves, so they started a war on this generation to create the type of youth they yearned for.

**MRR: We know that politically and socially things are getting worse in Turkey—like other countries it's getting a bit darker nowadays. How does it affect your lives and making music?**

Aybike: I mean, the alternative scene is still in good condition in Istanbul. There are lots of bands around, but in everyday Turkey lots of terrible things happen, so the concerts and festivals get canceled. It creates bad situations for the musicians. Yet the government can celebrate their meetings and special religious days, so this cancelation of events is just for the alternative people. And lots of journalists and artists are going to prison for criticizing governmental policies. People can't create something when censorship exists. If an artist is terrified to create, then we can't talk about a democracy. Some people think they are OK because the government hasn't attacked them yet, but it won't be long before their turn will come.

Tolga: Government is trying to change youth in Turkey by their Islamic ideals. Occupy Gezi was a cultural uniting to save a park and trees there in the middle of the city. All the alternative people were together there, but after Occupy all of them are spitted out. People are horrified, so many people were killed. And it is still going on. Taksim Square is not the center of musical movement in Istanbul anymore. Now people like us are getting more abused at Taksim.

**MRR: Your songs like "Dialogues for Monkeys," "Jungle," "Doomsday," and "Get the Power" are so powerful. What are the general lyrical themes of Reptilians from Andromeda?**

Aybike: "Dialogues for Monkeys" is about a government who banned evolution lessons in schools in Turkey. "Jungle" is a psychedelic trip that we live together with Tolga. Modern life sucks and sometimes being in nature makes us so free. There are lovely animals. Sometime we have to turn our face to them—not on YouTube videos, just in nature—to remember something pure. "Get the Power" is just about people who are running just for fame, now the world is all about fame. That's it!

**MRR: Which bands are you listening to nowadays? Any hidden treasures or new bands that you recommend us the check out?**

Tolga: Meatbodies, Ex Hex, KEN Mode, Sharkmuffin, Blacklisters, Pigs, Arabrot, Sic Alps, Dead Ghosts.

Aybike: L'ordre d'Héloïse, Castlebeat, CIA SHHarpie, Cult Club and Spooky Cigarette.

**MRR: What are the plans for the rest of 2017 for Reptilians from Andromeda? Which surprises can we expect in the future? Maybe some collaborations?**

Aybike: There will be two more Reptilians EP releases from UK labels. So there're upcoming concerts and festivals in Turkey. We really want to go the US, Europe, and Japan in next autumn!

*Stay tuned for EPs on UK-based Cruel Nature and Small Bear Records and check out the videos Reptilians From Andromeda made to accompany their songs "Come On Babe" and "Fashion Now." All this and more at facebook.com/reptiliansfromandromeda.*

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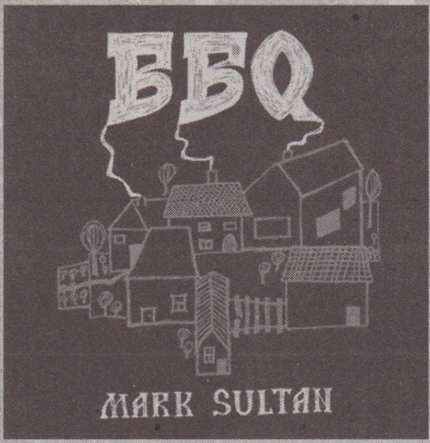

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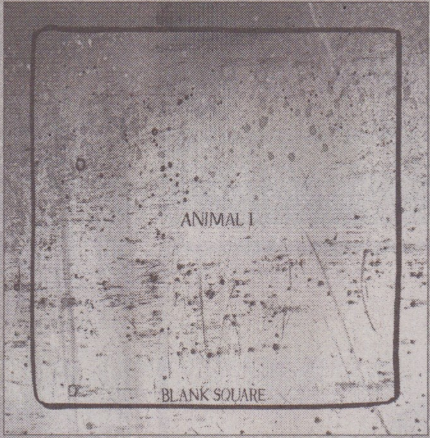

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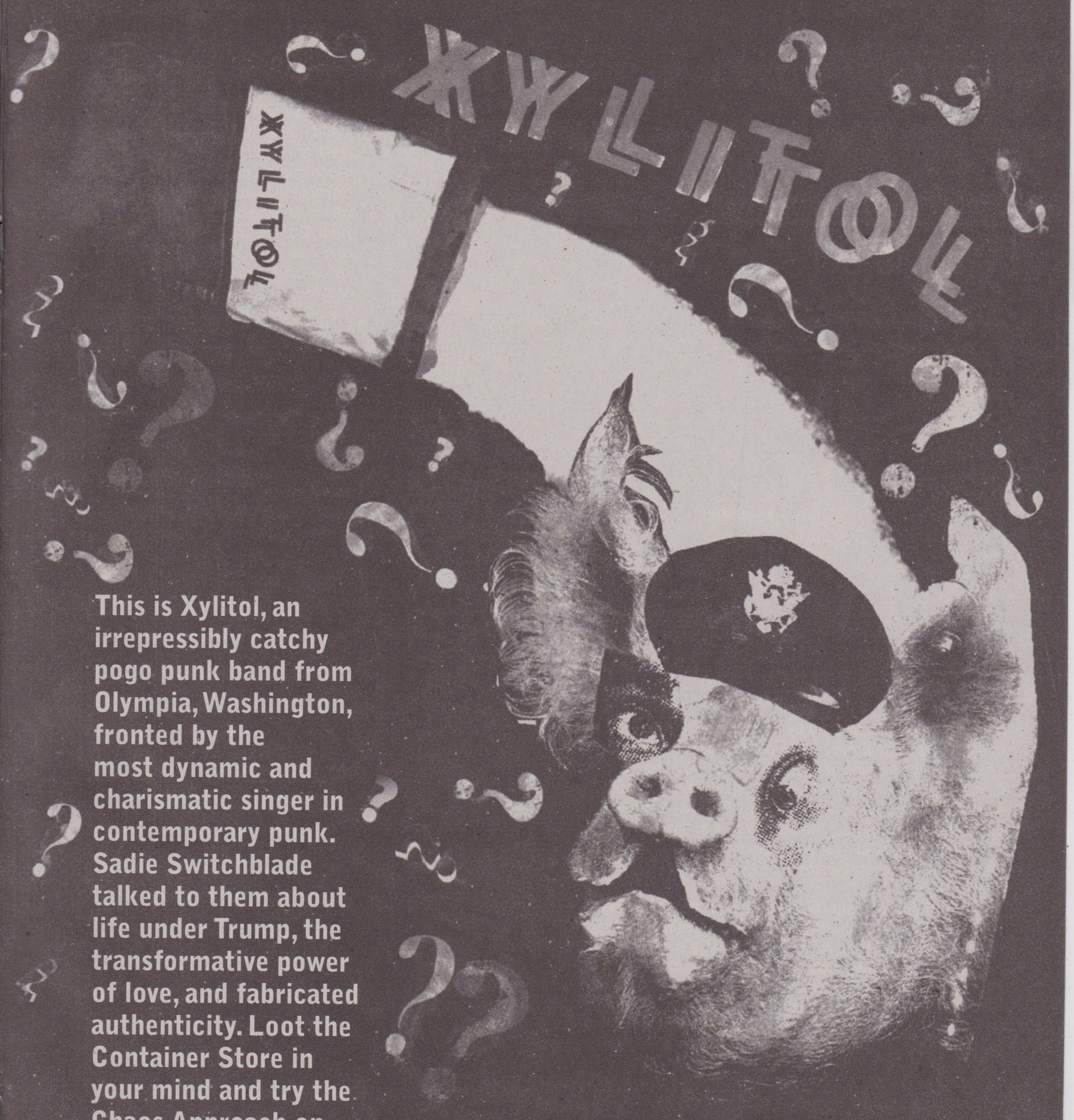


**This is Xylitol, an irrepressibly catchy pogo punk band from Olympia, Washington, fronted by the most dynamic and charismatic singer in contemporary punk. Sadie Switchblade talked to them about life under Trump, the transformative power of love, and fabricated authenticity. Loot the Container Store in your mind and try the Chaos Approach on for size—you'll be glad you did.**

**Photos provided by the band and Ellen Rumel.**

**MRR: When did the band form and under what pretext? Were there certain goals or did you just want to make some noise?**
WINTER: Originally Jake and Pancakes asked me to be in a Totalitär-like band, but it was a lie.
JAKE: Really?
LAURA: In my opinion, it formed because we all found each other because, well, me and Winter were in a—

**MRR: Domestic partnership? [*laughter*]**
WINTER: I think it's all about true love. And the transformative power of love. I often visualize me and Laura holding

hands in a field surrounded by the pink light of love. It's something that my therapist told me to do and it really helps me to play well.
LAURA: In the version of the story where we have free will, I found myself inside of the Container Store, and I had never been in a band before, and neither had Winter, so we were in the same department of the Container Store. We tried to bore a hole through the wall and crawled out the other side into this band and felt like we had escaped the Container Store. But over the years being in this band we've slowly found that we've just entered another department.

**MRR: Can you explain the metaphor of the Container Store?**
LAURA: So if you really think about it, our entire existence is spent inside the Container Store. There are moments where maybe you're watching the chamber of commerce burn down in the streets, or you had a very public rimjob while Nazis die in a circle around you, and you feel like you've exited your department, like the gender department, or the school department, the misery department and left the Container Store entirely...but, you may have just entered a new department. And over the months and years, the codes and mores of the new department start to enclose on you and then you have to get out of that department.
WINTER: Laura's saying that there's no total freedom. You can't ever really be outside the Container Store.
LAURA: But you can try to exit your personal container to find a new, nicer container for the time being.

**MRR: So it's like taking an escalator from Filene's Basement to Macy's?**
LAURA: Exactly.

**MRR: Laura, we've been friends for years and you have long been an advocate of the opinion that the void—despair, grief, despondency, loneliness, etc.—cannot be filled, and must be gazed into periodically, even revered. In the song "Chaos Approach" you sing "*no more 'hi, how are you?' / I'll take bottomless pit.*" Why is it important to you to choose bottomless pit over a more traditional exchange of pleasantries?**
LAURA: Donald Trump got elected the other day and I was talking to Winter about it and I think that now it just means that there are absolutely no rules and everyone is constantly cosplaying. I was literally on Capitol Hill the other night and someone was in an alligator costume and I was like, yeah, Donald Trump was elected—we're all gonna cosplay the most absurd and caricatured versions of ourselves for the next four years. To me, facing the totally fucked misery hellishness of the world is preferable, because at least you're not lying to yourself, and while miserable and horrible it's also hilarious.

**MRR: How can we show up and fight back now that Donald Reagan AKA Ronald Trump has been elected president? Is it a time to reach out or a time to shore up our defenses?**
JAKE: The only power that we have is with the people who we are already close enough to to understand who they are and their complexities, how to work together with them. I think the idea of reaching out is an activist ideal that turns people into abstractions, and acts as though we have some common cause and can work together. It's just looking for a god or something instead of hunkering down with people and learning their actual needs. So hunker down I guess.
WINTER: I also want to say that it's the '80s again and for the next four years at least every punk record is required to have a fucked up picture of Donald Trump on it and if your record doesn't have that on the cover you're a poser.
LAURA: I think that it's time to do the things that you wanted to do but do them a thousand percent. Like fucking shit up, fighting the fuck back, and defining yourself and seeing who joins. Because I think it's a moment where everyone needs to be as fucked up and freaky as possible and unleash anarchy on the world. I think everyone's ready for that.
JAKE: And I think that's the only true way to reach out, 'cause then you find people doing the same thing as you, instead of reaching out in the traditional way of "movement building" or whatever.

**MRR: So you could reach out with the tip of a stun baton?**
LAURA: Yeah like, as you spank your girlfriend with a self-help book in public while wearing a ski-mask and yelling "it's time to do this instead of therapy!", you'll find that you'll maybe be...among millions. [*laughter*]

WINTER: I actually did that with my girlfriend last week [*laughter*] but using a statistics textbook because I really love science.

**MRR: Colter, you're the fourth bassist of Xylitol, what have you done with the other two?**
COLTER: I don't know what I did with them! I think I've been wanting to be in this band so long that I've just been plotting my revenge on the previous members.

**MRR: Xylitol's music is dizzying, catchy and relentless. Winter, when you sit down to write riffs on guitar, what emotional state are you typically in? Is there anything you are hoping to express?**
WINTER: I'm pretty much in a constant state of desperation and anxiety, so, usually that. I'm trying to escape that part of the Container Store that I'm in in my mind at that time, alone in my room, usually it's like two or three a.m., and I hope that if I play guitar enough, punk will save me and I'll get out of the department. Also Jake writes some of the riffs and Colter does too.
JAKE: Definitely a group effort. We're all ruthless in our group writing. It's a very direct group!

**MRR: What punk trends do you hope to see die in 2017?**
LAURA: Fake mysterios.
JAKE: Too easy though. There's got to be some deeper punk trends.

**MRR: What punk trends do you want to start then?**
WINTER: Maybe trying the Chaos Approach?

**MRR: What does trying the Chaos Approach mean to you? That's a serious question.**
WINTER: A punk trend I want to see die is people bringing identity politics into their punk politics. Like, it's really frustrating going to shows that are specifically for queer punk and people deciding who is and isn't important while they're there. I know that a lot of the time when there's a band that a lot of queers identify with, it becomes this cis-women and AFAB trans people deciding who gets to participate in the space. And me and most trans women I know just stay on the sides because we're worried about someone...like, AFABs have punched me at shows a bunch of times because of the way they feel about men, but they don't take it out on men, they take it out on me.

But the solution to that isn't like "Oh, trans women should be the people who have the power and the voice and the people that are allowed to talk." I don't know what the solution is exactly, but there's just kind of a general attempt to police who's allowed to speak and who's not allowed to speak based on whatever identity is popular at the time, or whatever identities people find acceptable at the time. The most egregious time of people policing me at a show was this cis-girl started choking me at a gig 'cause she told me later that some men were being shitty about something, and I was moshing so she picked me out of a crowd of people who were all moshing and just like started choking me and pushing me. And it was—
LAURA: Completely fucked.

**MRR: Smart phones and social media have encouraged people to document the mundane. We now fabricate spontaneity, carefully curating "authentic moments" to filter and repackage. In this self-referential age, does authenticity exist? Sub-question, can you talk about the idea of punk authenticity? I'm thinking about your song "It'll Slip."**
LAURA: I think that when you actually have real conversations with people at gigs about what's going on in their life, or you know, it's not about posing for a future picture but it's about actually listening to each other and what's going on, it feels palpably different. There was a 72-hour battle of the bands yesterday in Seattle and we all were in hat-bands that we had three days to write three songs, and it was a bunch of people who were in different bands with each other. It was a really weird time because it had been planned before the election, and it forced everyone into these bands at the literal worst possible moment ever, and forced us to talk to each other. I think that doing shit like that—ruining the cool kid culture—is an attempt at authenticity. But I don't know if there is such thing as pure authenticity 'cause we're so fucking mediated all the time but I feel like when you start making eye contact with people, or you don't bring your phone to a show and just stare at the wall instead of trying to escape the awkwardness, its a good start.
JAKE: I think authenticity is something that occurs but not really something that you can carry or be.

**MRR: So much of punk these days references the past in an attempt to achieve this mystical authenticity that doesn't exist.**
WINTER: Don't talk about D-beat that way! [*laughter*]

JAKE: But I also think that it's kind of a trap, because the opposite of that is also like really annoying. When people just go in this direction of trying to be different and they just make annoying music or are obnoxious.

**MRR: When we were kids if you saw someone walking down the street with a studded belt there was an overwhelming urge to go up to that person and start a conversation. Are we more alienated now or are kids still doing this and we're just the older ones who are out of touch?**
COLTER: I grew up in a small town and there were not very many punks at all, just a lot of really horrible people around all the time. So if I saw somebody with a punk shirt or a studded belt or something I was really excited to talk to them 'cause it was like the only think I could relate to people on. But I don't know if that was the best thing…Because it kind of got you in this headspace of assuming that if somebody's punk then they're gonna be "down" or something, and that's not always true, some punks are assholes.
WINTER: We just went to this screening for Samuel Shanahoy's new movie *So Long, Suburbia*. And it made me realize how I feel kind of over and sometimes bitter about making connections in that way. But it was about teenagers today and it looked way different from me making those connections as a teen trying to connect with other queers and punks. And I was like, oh, this same way of making friends is totally relevant and incredibly important to teenagers still, it just looks different now. 'Cause the culture's different.

Queerness means a lot of different things to people. I think that queerness and non-binary identities are more available to young people than they used to be. I got into this idea that it takes people awhile to get older and then really understand gender and sexuality and non-binary things about themselves and other people, but then it's this movie about these teenagers who like were actually played by teenagers who it was really authentic for, about them being in high school and connecting with each other and being way smarter than I am about that stuff.

I think the conditions repeat themselves for every new generation. And then when you get older it's easy to forget what it felt like then and what you needed then. And then to not be the same older punks that didn't give you what you needed and didn't support you when you were a youth, and were bitter and kinda mean to you.

**MRR: So you don't want to be that.**
WINTER: I don't wanna be that. It helped remind me that I could be that without even knowing it.
LAURA: I just want to say that when I was in high school this fucking guy who was in that band State Control worked at the fucking Store-24 and I used to get high and buy peach rings and try to talk to him. And he super didn't give a shit about me, but I was so excited that someone who was punk existed at all. But now we're in this age of small-business owners who cooperate with the police, have tattoos, and wear Discharge shirts so it's a slippery and insidious culture we have to combat to keep punk criminal.

**MRR: Laura, your lyrics are truly one-of-a-kind. It's not often that you hear absurdist calls to action like "*sling a string cheese in the air*" or "*line your eyes / palm the fries*."**
WINTER: I want to say that the string cheese in the air—

**MRR: From here on referred to as The String Cheese Incident.**
WINTER: The String Cheese Incident is not a fantasy, it's not a creation, it's—
JAKE: It's Winter's lived reality
WINTER: The reality of me being at Olympia Hardcore Fest and moshing with ripped-up string cheese in my hand and then giving people string cheese to throw at people while they were moshing. I did that during Big Zit and the vocalist stopped at one point and gave me the most serious look ever like "What. Are. You. Doing?" [*laughter*]

**MRR: You also encourage the listener to "melt it down like provolone." But to go back to your question, does the humor in your songs inform larger ideas or is it an end in-and-of itself?**
LAURA: I think it's a means without ends because everything's so fucked. There's no grand narrative, there's no possibility of winning. We're losing all the time and we need to enjoy how we're going to lose, by getting revenge, crab-walking off the edge of the cliff to assplant on a cop's face. Shart a new world in the process.
JAKE: I think that for me the humor of the approach, keeping it in the realm of the absurd, is a tactic to avoid things we're talking about being captured by a framework of boring activism, or just like stupid hopefulness. And instead keeping it in the realm of like all-out attack and defending or loving people you know and not trying to create boring frameworks and shit, which is so much of what resistance in a non-profit dominated world is based around and it's why everyone is alienated and would rather play X-Box or whatever.

WINTER: If your activism is dour and serious all the time you're just gonna get burned out.
LAURA: I think we're just trying to decimate the idea that you can't be one-hundred-percent total freak and also angry, sad, and fighting back. Or like, you don't have to be serious and vulnerable all the time to hate everything.
JAKE: You don't have to sacrifice your enjoyment of life to some "greater cause" to destroy the things you hate.

**MRR: With those answers in mind, what demarcates the line between existentialist punk ennui and over-privileged hipster apathy? If we're talking about how music can be this thing that's enjoyable and we live in the moment of it and it doesn't have to mean anything...to me Laura, that's a departure from a conversation you and I had three or four years ago, where you were being critical of the band Iron Chic for not meaning anything, and we had this conversation of like well, is there something wrong with liking existential music? What's the difference between that and what Xylitol is doing?**
WINTER: Iron Chic makes me feel so good.
I think the difference is just are you doing something, 'cause I think you can have the same attitude but it's like are you supporting people you love and are you doing the things that are within your ability to oppose power? And if not you might just be like saying ironic things and wearing American flag apparel for some reason. [*laughter*]
COLTER: I think it's really easy for the two to cross over. I think it's really easy to assume that because it's punk it's radical in some way, when really that's just an aesthetic thing and in certain cases, yeah, it is really genuine, but when we take it outside of punk, that's the key part. If it just stays in the room, then...
LAURA: I heard that G.L.O.S.S. tried to lead a march after a gig when a young black man had just been killed by police. And I feel like that's the kind of shit that demarcates the line. And I don't feel like there's no room for music that's not explicitly political—I enjoy a lot of music that doesn't have any political content. But it's hard to be in a scene that's scaffolded by people who make music with no political content, who seem ambivalent about the police and white supremacy. I don't know exactly how this relates but I feel like a lot of the songs I wrote as pep-talks to myself. Like "Femme Shoulder Devil" is like be as much of a fucking freak as possible and fuck shit up, be yourself and don't tend toward being a boring punk man. So, I dunno. I think that's the line. And I also think that it's totally in the eye of the beholder. Like, who has space to listen to white power pop bands from the '70s and who's just done with it and doesn't want to listen to shit coming from people whose subject positions they have no time for anymore.
JAKE: I feel like also in terms of having lyrics that are kind of ironic or nihilist or disaffected there's definitely a risk of it rolling over into this zone of hyper-privileged disaffectedness or nihilism or whatever but I think that it is really political and it's refusing a Christian ethos on approaching things you hate. Not taking yourself too fucking seriously, and just melding your attack on the world with your whole being and the people you're actually close to, instead of abstracting it into some big thing. And that's what I read in a lot of the politics of the lyrics. The songs are against white supremacy and capitalism and heterosexism and stuff but they don't have an activist feel to them, they're kind of sardonic...and I think that's really important.

**MRR: In that sense to me it's a really queer band because you use humor in a way that's flippant, approaching stuff that's too heavy, very like, John Waters-y punk.**
WINTER: With the Trump stuff, people I've talked to are either really despondent or try to do like a positivity look-on-the-bright-side thing. And usually the only thing that actually improves my feelings around it is weird stuff that Laura says. Because Laura's not trying to, in lyrics or in weird manic conversation with me, deny hating everything. Everything is ridiculous at the same time and you can hate it and turn feelings about Donald Trump into an obsession with larping.
COLTER: I feel like lyrics like that really click in with people who feel similarly in a certain way that dry political lyrics don't really. People are like "this makes a lot of sense to me, I get why this is funny." I think it's really valuable in that way.
LAURA: I guess writing lyrics is like, I don't have an answer or any type of prescriptive thing, especially because all of our friends are coming from different places—gender, race, sexuality, class—and I think that it's more important to me to center and think about critique before answers. Because everyone's gonna have their own answers that will converge and...there's no grand salvation or anything.

**MRR: I was on the beach in New Jersey a few weeks ago and**

**happened on a gay wedding. There was a drone hovering over the ceremony and taking pictures. When I see queer people in public or gay stuff in public, regardless of the context, it makes me feel really emotional, even though I know that gay marriage is part of an assimilation process that, as you say in your lyrics to "Shit Buffet," includes certain people at the exclusion of others. So I guess the harder question is like, do you guys have visceral reactions to seeing more queer stuff around and in popular media? And how do you reconcile that with what you know to be true about it? And now given the context of a Trump presidency does it feel different to you because potentially a lot of things could change?**
WINTER: Y'know, if I want to see gay stuff, I'm gonna go to gayporn.com. [*laughter*]
LAURA: I wrote that song right after Pride. The mayor of Seattle had spent $66,000 painting the crosswalks like rainbows. And there are so many queer homeless youth in Seattle and I work in a place where there's lots of rich white gay people who are married who come in, so I think it was coming from this context of being really, really frustrated with how fucked up and racist and the establishment gay white left is. It's interesting, I think that a lot of the disaffected lyrics of the band so far have been in the context of hating this particular brand of hateful white supremacy and heteropatriarchy of the left in Seattle. Maybe people will start weaponizing their weddings and then we'll care more. But I think the context is changing.
JAKE: There's such a strong connection between the politics of visibility and with getting registered with the state and like, literal surveillance, like, capture and—just Container Store shit. Laura you pretty much made a random phrase in that song—"gay surveillance wedding"—and Sadie actually saw it. [*laughter*] A drone flying over a wedding...it's nuts. But it's easier to just rail on it rather than approach the complexity that yeah, there are people getting gay married for citizenship and that's a really complex reality for sure.
WINTER: Pretty much any time assimilation comes up I immediately start thinking about U.S. citizenship and how I wish U.S. citizenship didn't exist and I wish people wouldn't participate in gay surveillance weddings [*laughter*], but then on the other hand I was born a U.S. citizen. And a U.S. birth certificate is like the most valuable document on the planet pretty much. We're all surveyed all the time and there are structures that allow us to live, and if we don't participate in some of them, we're not permitted to live. So, it's not necessarily that you can choose not to be in a gay surveillance wedding. The government's going to put you in a gay surveillance wedding whether you like it or not. [*laughter*]
JAKE: Also, just because structures allow people to survive in our lived reality doesn't mean that they're essentially good or reliable…I think if there's issues with like gay surveillance wedding vibes it's that people with money and power mobilize that as a good thing in order to eclipse other things, try to enmesh people in complicity with white supremacy and erase other struggles.
COLTER: It leaves a lot of people behind.
WINTER: I think the dividing line is "do you love your drone?"

**MRR: Your live shows can best be described as demented. Laura, you command the stage—what feeling do you want people to take away with them when they've left your show?**
JAKE: I want people to feel like they've seen a band that is truly different from the bands they see every week.
WINTER: I want people to just basically not notice that I was there, and think about how tight it was that they moshed wicked sick. Also I want to plug my zine *How To Mosh Wicked Sick*.
LAURA: I feel like I black out and feel kind of possessed when we play, so I just like can really only hope that people try to lose their minds and slam. And also just like I would really ideally love it if people ate lots of acne promoting foods before our gigs so they can pop their zits in the pit.
WINTER: It's a fetish thing.

LAURA: It's a spiritual thing.
WINTER: A sex thing.

**MRR: Laura, earlier today you said that you think "adult coloring books are a new technology of control." Can you elaborate on this? Because in my experience adult coloring books are things that really help people calm down and feel**

**grounded while they're experiencing PTSD.**

LAURA: I've just been thinking about adult coloring books lately because they're in every single bookstore, they're sold at my job, and in one week three of my friends suggested coloring in them. And at that point I start to think that maybe everyone is coloring the same picture and, it's a big stop sign….

WINTER: I was incarcerated in mental health institutions for two-and-a-half years. Therapy and mental healthcare are actually forms of population control and dominance. People are actually held captive, sometimes for years because of it, and I have a lot of friends who were held captive at least for a short while over it. But also I had PTSD largely from that, and it's complicated even identifying with PTSD because it's a diagnosis from that same dominating systems. I could not function if I didn't have medications from that same system, I could not function if I didn't have therapy from that same system. And adult coloring books are like a pretty tangential, lighthearted aspect of that, but I just don't have a choice about getting help from that system or not. It's like, when you're a kid, if your parents are total shits to you, you still have to have them take care of you even if they're hurting you. It's population control, it's what we have.

**MRR: You think personal therapy is population control?**

WINTER: Absolutely yeah. It's dominance. Even though I love my therapist, it's there so like...I'm disabled, and I'm less disabled because of all these things, and it's there so that I can produce something for society. In the view of that dominating system it's actually in a lot of ways counterproductive that they incarcerated me because it made it harder for me to participate in society and produce. But, yeah, it's there to make sure that as many members of the population as possible are able to function and produce, and also find peace and self-love in a dominating system. I think for more people than not that allows them to feel enough comfort within that whole dominant structure that they can keep going to work and feel OK and have their gay surveillance wedding….

LAURA: It's not vilifying the measures that we take to do self-care, but it's also pointing out how self-care is a really useful tool of society to make people pacified enough to function. And I just think that the adult coloring book thing while yeah, absolutely no judgment for the need for it, but it's just so amazing...we live in such a hellish, horrible reality, and it's so hard to look three feet in front of you...we're told, it'll be OK, color inside the lines, calm down, so we don't flip out and really set it off against the power structures that tell us we're crazy. But you know, we all have to take care of ourselves and function and feel OK, and do that in whatever way we want. But also thinking about these institutions, like gay surveillance weddings, adult coloring books, also as systems of pacification and control...without judgment of the ways people participate in or need them, but critiquing those institutions.

JAKE: Society is just so total. It's just—it's completely total.

**MRR: What do you mean?**

JAKE: Like, everything that you are able to do in life is in some way curated towards a normative end. Learning how to read, going to school, I dunno—there shouldn't be judgment there...things can help you, but they only help you to the degree that you make them help you, and their inclination toward you is actually hostile and meant to make you passive, and it's up to you to profane the world and take what you need, get through, and fight, but that doesn't mean that everything isn't crafted against you...there's just always some sort of control...just keeping that in mind when you're using things that the world offers. Just basic, nothing-is-neutral type of thing, but it is like really complicated because we all need so much from a world that we hate.

WINTER: Jake is so basic.

JAKE: I'm so basic.

WINTER: I'm way happier in the part of the Container Store that I'm in now than when I was locked in the institutions and every single action that I ever took was dictated by people who had really immediate control over me, like whether I could leave the room that I was in, whether I could talk to people, that kind of thing. Whether I was in solitary confinement or not. But...I'm still in the Container Store.

**MRR: The tape and the record were recorded with Joey Seward.**

JAKE: I love Joey. I always love recording with Joey.

LAURA: [The demo] was the first time we recorded, the vocals were like one take. Joey's the best and I think maybe single-handedly making the Olympia punk scene amazing for putting so much time and effort in and letting people pay a really minimal amount to get recordings done. That's probably

why so much fucking amazing punk comes out of Olympia because people have the access to it.
WINTER: Our band actually sucks but you wouldn't know that from bandcamp.com! Thank you Joey!

**MRR: Laura and Winter, this was your first time recording, did it demystify bands and records, were there certain things where you were like, oh, that's how this happens?**
LAURA: I'm twenty-seven and I've wanted to be in bands since I was sixteen and it took this long to have enough self-confidence and space in my life to just fucking do it and not give a shit about what people think. Everyone that wants to start bands should just fucking do it. Joey was really amazing 'cause it just felt really natural and didn't feel weird. Also I think that one thing that helped me be a vocalist was going to karaoke once a week after my shift. If anyone wants to be a vocalist or be prepared for recording just go to karaoke sober.
WINTER: It was a really beautiful experience for me because I was nervous about it and having a hard time with it in some ways, or just, I was nervous about it, but these babbies stayed in the room with me and gave me advice and encouragement, and Jake air-drummed for me...and I just felt really loved in that situation...which, I believe, has transformative power. [*laughter*]

**MRR: OK, last question! What does "trying the Chaos Approach" mean to you? This is a serious question.**
WINTER: Oh man, does it really have to be serious?

**MRR: Well it's a serious question, doesn't necessarily mean that the answers have to be serious.**
WINTER: I just have to do things to feel free all the time. Besides a beautiful death, that's the only that really matters to me in life: being free. Just 'cause of my past experiences, like the stuff I was talking about with mental health institutions, if I am living routine or like doing things like the way they're supposed to happen, I just start feeling so deep in the Container Store and I just have to do something to feel free. I just want chaos all the time, I want conversations to not make sense, I want things to not happen the way they're supposed to be, I want people out in the streets doing naughty, naughty girl stuff. It just has to be chaos. My room has to be chaos, I want there to be as much rotting food in there as possible. Please come over and hang out with me. [*laughter*]
COLTER: I think just like, getting crazy and maybe doing what you feel moreso than what's prescribed all the time, because maybe what you feel is probably the most genuine approach to things.
WINTER: Fuck the man, be yourself.
COLTER: Trust how you feel, and you can always change how you feel, but I think like, trying things, instead of being in your own head all the time.
JAKE: Yeah, and I think also just like, we live in a world that loves to capture what we do and sell it back to us in a totally unthreatening person, and for me "trying the chaos approach" is like staying a step ahead of that and avoiding prescribed forms of interaction and action that can be captured and declawed. Just always pushing the envelope and not letting things take a solid form that can be turned into, like, whatever, politics. And that just includes everything. I don't know. Just everything.
WINTER: You too can have Chaos Approach apparel at garyslappypants.com.
LAURA: I think it means walking into the waiting room of a doctor's office and going up to the front desk, and the secretary asking you what your first and last name, gender, age, and insurance number are, and you taking your engorged, gorilla-fur hand and gently caressing his cheek, and licking his forehead in one sandpaper thwap, and then beginning to sing your favorite, your favorite theme from *Reading Rainbow*, as a small red balloon starts to emit from your asshole, and slowly fills with so much air that the entire building pops, and, uh. Yeah.

*Xylitol's* …Is Toxic to Pigs?? *EP will be out in early July on Total Negativity and Thrilling Living Records. Listen at xylitolband.bandcamp.com or catch them on tour with Dauðyflin in a city near you.*

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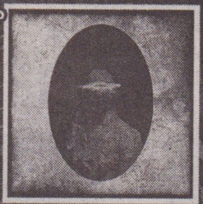

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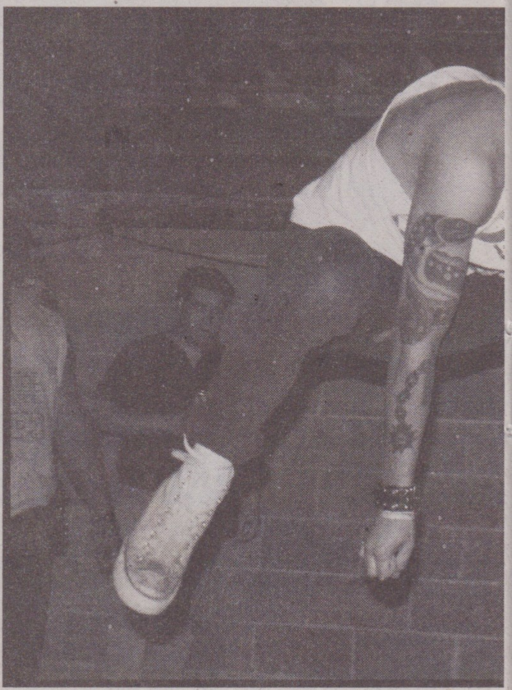
# WAYNEZ WORLD III

**PHOTOS BY AARON RHODES**

**L-R: BLACK POPE, LARD BOYS, THI**



# in KCMO

## E SWITCH, THE VITAMENS, UNFORGIVEN, CRUELSTER, NOT SHIT, WARM BODIES

***In the late 1970s and early 1980s, New York City's overlapping visual art and underground music communities fostered countless boundary-pushing, rabble-rousing geniuses, stretching from the initial mutation of punk into post-punk and ultimately to No Wave's total deconstruction of rockist forms. In a scene full of these conceptually-minded sonic provocateurs, Y Pants were among the most sharp, sardonic, and simultaneously playful—three women playing economical, off-kilter art-clatter with a lyrical eye cast toward traditionally-perceived gender roles, the failings of modern romance, and favorite sweaters. The group's complete discography (consisting of a self-titled 1980 EP and 1982's Beat It Down LP) has just been reissued on vinyl by Water Wing Records, and should be mandatory listening for all would-be scholars in the history of weirdo femme-punk.***

**MRR: Tell me a little bit about how each of you started to play music. Were you self-taught, or did you have a more formal musical education?**

Gail: I took recorder lessons when I was in second grade and piano lessons from third through sixth or seventh grade. Also, I went to Catholic school and got a pretty decent music education there.

Barbara: My father gave me an accordion when I was a kid and there was a teacher in the town I lived in, so I took some lessons and learned to read musical notation. In college, I got an acoustic guitar and picked up a few chords. I attended a wildly radical music series called the Once Concerts that made a big impression on me. After college, like Gail, I got a recorder and met weekly with a group playing mainly Medieval recorder pieces. I took up flute but didn't get very far with it. I then I lived in London for a few years making experimental films and working for the London Filmmakers Co-op. While there, I got to perform triangle a few times with the Scratch Orchestra. Returning to the US, I bought an electric bass, messed around on it and soon tried out for a band that became Theoretical Girls. I didn't get the job, but Glenn Branca and I started the band Daily Life. Later the drummer for that band and I became the rhythm section of Glenn's band, the Static. I then toured with his guitar ensemble. It was a big beautiful macho sound. Partly in reaction, Y Pants began making "little music" but with a DIY aesthetic and we soon amplified. We learned as we went along.

Verge: I wasn't a typical concert-goer or an LP collector, although I did see Elvis Presley live before he was a mess. In high school, I did the usual musical things like being in the band and in a pretty good brass quintet. Later in high school, I was in a girly trio that sang pop songs, with some coaching, at various small town events. I enjoyed it, but perhaps I envied my brother who played the drums. In college I sang in a newly-formed madrigal choir.

**MRR: How did the three of you meet and decide to start playing together?**

Gail: Barbara and I lived in the same building on Spring Street. I had this idea that I wanted to make a 45, and talked to Barbara, who had been in a band, about it. I found a toy piano on the street, but it was a pretty crummy one and I soon purchased a more upscale model from Woolworth's. We started jamming together, then we were offered a gig at TR3 and Barbara suggested Verge should be our drummer—I only vaguely knew her at the time. She'd never played drums, so I don't know how Barbara had this insight, but Verge turned out to be a great drummer.

Verge: My brother, Brian, introduced me to Barbara at the artists' pub Magoo's. Barbara was aware of my work in Super-8 film but I had somehow missed seeing the Static. She was loaned 3 Mercer Store

# Y PANTS

***Interview and introduction by Erika Elizabeth.***

***Y Pants are Barbara Ess, Verge Piersol and Gail Vachon.***

while Stefan Eins was in Austria. She used it for rehearsal, I guess, and for open jamming. I went there one night out of curiosity. I fooled around on various instruments and had a good time. Days (or weeks?) later, Barbara called me to ask if I wanted to join her and her friend Gail, as percussionist, to prepare for an opening gig at Tier 3. I was surprised, but I said yes.

Barbara: I have two sisters, so being in a three-girl band made sense and was familiar to me. At the time, I wanted to make some "little" intimate music after playing in the Static, and his big wall of sound guitar pieces (even though it was exhilarating).

**MRR: When the band formed, who or what were your primary influences and inspirations, musically or non-musically?**

Barbara: As I remember, in addition to Patti Smith, Suicide, Television, et al, some other stuff I was listening to was the Ramones, X-Ray Spex, Lotte Lenya singing Kurt Weill, and going to shows of no wave art bands—Teenage Jesus, DNA, Mars, etc. The songs of doo-wop girl groups like the Shirelles and the Ronettes were in my head since teenagehood, and in retrospect, Y Pants songs mixed the feeling, tone, and occasional harmonies of those girl groups with a kind of feminist post-punk energy. Virginia introduced me to the Pretenders who I liked a lot, too.

Verge: I saw and loved early performances by Laurie Anderson. I listened to country, especially Loretta Lynn, the Pretenders and Bob Dylan. I liked the Sex Pistols and the Ramones. I worked for La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela for six months where the oscillator drone was always on and musicians would come and go. The non-commercial band atmosphere that swept through the art scene in 1977–78 was thrilling. I can't say there were specific influences except for a touch of reggae in anything I did in Y Pants, but once we formed I listened more intently to rock bands for the drumming and taught myself the bare basics with tips from Paul Burwell and Don Christensen. Sumner Crane and Jeff Lohn were friends. I admired Nancy Arlen and Ikue Mori for their original approaches to drumming in Mars and DNA. In fact, the stuff going on blotted out, for that period anyway, most everything else. It distracted me from the fact that I had lost my adjunct position teaching at Brooklyn College, had been dumped by my boyfriend, and had lost all my photography and film equipment in a burglary.

Gail: Honestly I don't remember feeling especially influenced by anyone as far as Y Pants. Records that come to mind that I was listening to around that time—Patti Smith, Keith Jarrett, the Modern Lovers. Disco was big. I'm sure I'm forgetting someone important, but I don't think there were direct influences. We just kind of played around and somehow it happened.

**MRR: Given that most of the bands that have since come to make up "the No Wave canon" generally fit into a traditional guitar / bass / drums rock'n'roll orthodoxy, even if the way that they approached performance and song structure within**

**that framework was much more radical and transgressive, did you ever encounter any sort of condescension or patronizing attitudes due to Y Pants' use of "toy" instruments?**

Gail: No. We were artists who had a band, so we weren't attempting to compete with traditional rock'n'roll. I think audiences thought it was cool that we made music with odd tools. After Verge's Mickey Mouse drumset fell apart, the only real "toy" we used was my toy piano, which has a noble history.

**MRR: You did two covers ("Off the Hook" by the Rolling Stones and "That's the Way Boys Are" by Lesley Gore), and one of the things that I love about Y Pants's takes on those songs is that they both wind up having this certain deadpan feminist edge that wasn't necessarily inherent in the source material. Lesley Gore has retroactively become a proto-feminist icon of sorts, but the Rolling Stones have never really been regarded as having enlightened attitudes toward gender roles, so there's a really interesting dichotomy there that ends up being blurred in your interpretations. Was there any sort of conscious subversive intent in that choice of covers? Did you consider Y Pants to be a "feminist" band, either at the time or in hindsight?**

Verge: We were feminist by nature, it was a given. My song "Beat It Down" was about developing resistance to the Don Juans I tended to be attracted to.

Gail: Yes, of course we were feminists, and those two songs were very consciously subverted in our renditions. I guess the idea of a female band doing the Stones song was part of the point, but the angst of the song is the same whether it's Mick Jagger singing it or me.

**MRR: All three of you are also visual artists, so I'm curious if your individual approaches to making visual art intersected at all with the process of writing and performing music in Y Pants, or were those art-making and music-making pursuits more discrete from one another?**

Barbara: We were kind of making collaborative art together and the DIY anything goes spirit in the air was stimulating.

Gail: As a filmmaker, I was becoming more interested in the soundtracks of my films than the images. I was playing with reel-to-reel tape recorders, making audio loops, playing things backwards or at the wrong speed, recording sounds that would not normally be considered music. In our live shows we sometimes played film loops and live TVs, but we didn't collaborate on anything but our music and performances.

Verge: I put music on some of my short Super-8 films and film loop installations, for instance, improvisation on a small home organ found at the flea market and some noise elements. That aesthetic carried over to Y Pants when we used the organ with keys taped down and a live TV on stage for our Franklin Furnace performance. Otherwise, I think what I wanted to do most was just keep the beat.

**MRR: How did the Y Pants reissues come about? Since we're living in the age of seemingly every '80s underground band of note reuniting, have the three of you ever entertained the idea of performing or recording music together again?**

Gail: None of this is our doing. We were approached (in the late '90s?) by Chris Freeman to release our two records on his new CD label Periodic Document. I think he did two pressings of 500 which both sold out. More recently we were contacted by several different people who wanted to reissue on vinyl, and we went with Water Wing because Alex seemed like the nicest and coolest of the bunch. I love our music and am proud of it, but it was a long time ago and the idea of going back doesn't interest me. So no, we won't be performing or recording again. I have dreamed about it a few times, but usually I've forgotten the words or my pants or some such disaster.

**MRR: What sorts of musical and / or artistic projects have each of you been involved with since Y Pants stopped performing?**

Barbara: Since Y Pants, I continued making art and music via a DIY aesthetic. I built a pinhole camera and began making photos, again skipping the "learning process." Since then, I've had a bunch of one-person and group shows in galleries and museums in US and Europe, mainly of my photos (even though I no longer use that camera) and video and sound works. In terms of bands, after Y Pants I was in the short-lived group Listen to the Animal, jammed lots but played out only once with poet Barbara Barg's band No Shame, was part of the marching Drum Corps of the women's activist group WAC, and formed a band with some of them, Ultra Vulva. We self-released one single, "Twist in Bed." For a few years, I jammed and recorded with filmmaker Peggy Ahwesh as the band Radio Guitar—I on guitar, she on short wave radio. We released a CD on Ecstatic Peace Records and a limited edition vinyl, *Thrum* on Table of the Elements. Last year, I installed two sounds pieces for the 24 Hour Drone Fest at the Basillica in Hudson, NY. Visually, I am lately interested in remote viewing as a subject in my work.

Verge: After Y Pants, Peter Nadin, a British poet and painter, and I got together to play music. He wrote wonderful lyrics and sang and played guitar. Marnie Greenholz joined us on the bass. We got as far as making a rough demo before Peter went back to England for several months. When he got back, he decided to concentrate on painting, an obviously wise move. Then I joined Mark C. and Tom Paine to play drums in the group known as Body. After maybe a couple of months, I backed out, needing to address some health issues, get a real job, etc. James Lo took over as drummer and Marnie joined them at some point to be the bassist in what became Live Skull. My last musical projects were for performances at the Kitchen and in Speed Trials and a couple of other places. I made several percussion soundtracks, one for a dance performance and some for videos by Colab members (Collaborative Projects).

Gail: I haven't collaborated with anyone on any art projects since Y Pants—it might be nice to, though. I've continued to make films and work on sounds for them, and for the past two years I've been making very small (2x2" or smaller) paintings which are intended to be viewed with a magnifying glass.

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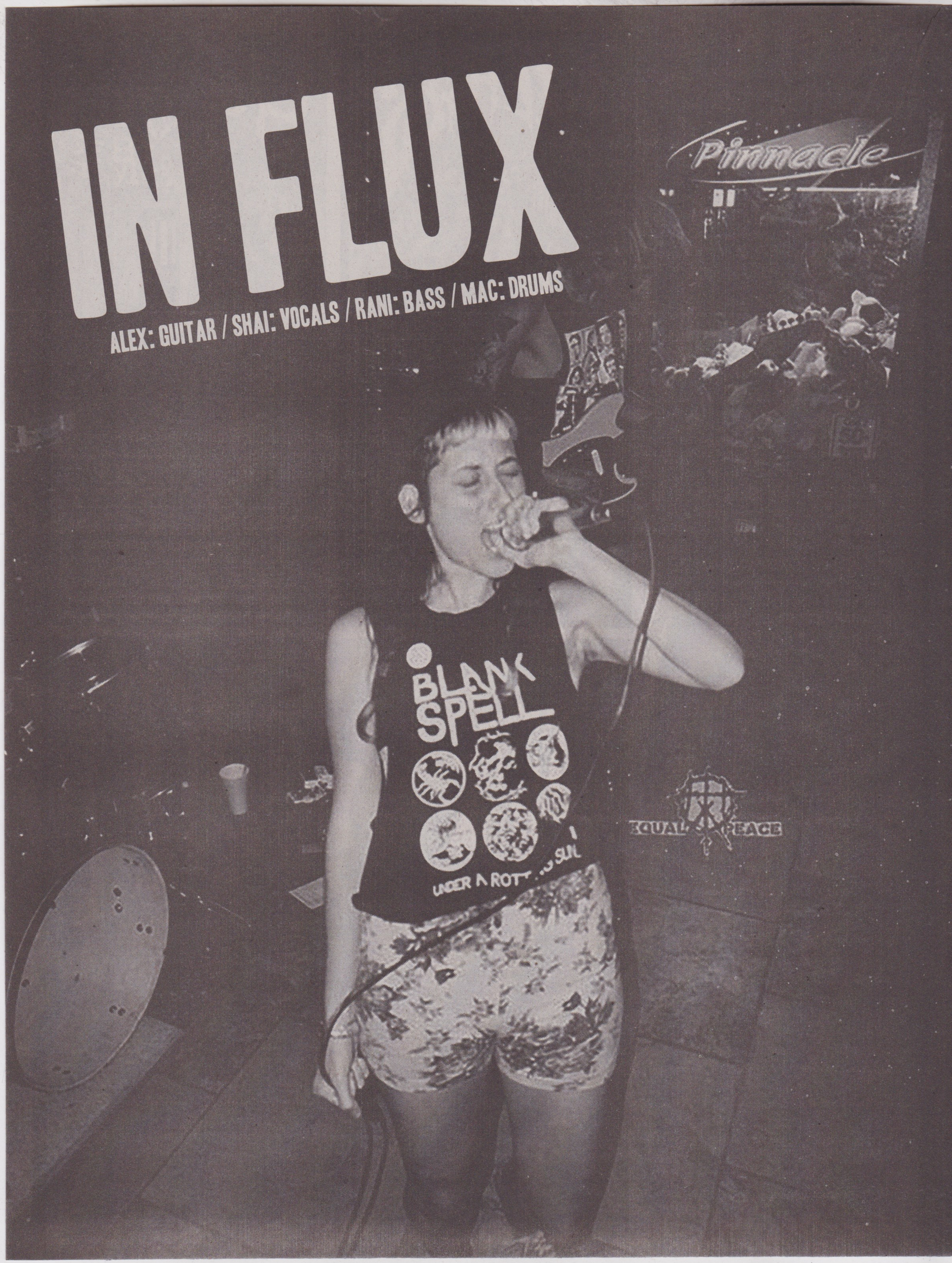
# IN FLUX

ALEX: GUITAR / SHAI: VOCALS / RANI: BASS / MAC: DRUMS



*In Flux was formed in Portland, OR in the winter of 2015 and recorded their first demo* No More Macho Bullshit *in February of 2016. Originally bonding over a mutual taste for both the intricacies of powerviolence and pummeling D-beats, In Flux sought out to create something incorporating both types of sound, layered with vulnerable lyrics expressing disdain for the patriarchal and cis-normative world, while also experiencing death, depression and beautiful friendships. On their last two tours, In Flux traveled the west coast and parts of the Midwest and southwest, and plan to get out east in the near future. Expect new noise from In Flux in the coming months. Until then, hug yr friends and punch a cop in the face.*

*Interview and introduction by Monica Melgar. Photos provided by the band and Equal Peace.*

**MRR: When you tell people you are in a band called In Flux and they're like "oh what kind of music?" what do you say?**

Rani: I'm the worst at this! Whenever people ask me this question, about any band really, I'm like, "Uhhhh I don't know they're loud and fast?" So I would say that In Flux is a little D-beat, a little powerviolence, with a splash of ignorant hardcore. We wanna see you dance but not be a jerk, ya know? But also if you're a head nodder that's cool too!

Mac: Lately I just tell people it's "hardcore punk rock."

Alex: It depends on the person I guess. When I think someone has a context for what our music might be like I just say "D-beat / powerviolence sort of mixture." Or "sprinkled ignorance amidst the D-beat."

**MRR: What do you think you give to In Flux that you don't have with your other bands? Like is there something you feel like you can get out better with this type of music or with each other?**

Rani: Oof. This is hard cause I feel like I get so much more out of In Flux than what I give! This band is definitely the most collectively run band I've ever been in. We write songs or complete half-finished songs together which is something I haven't quite experienced in other bands I've played in. One thing, among many things, that I really appreciate about playing music with Shai, Alex, and Mac is that there is a level of care and understanding that is very special...I can't describe it the way I want to. I feel like we communicate very well with each other and give each other space to do what we need to do in order to take care of ourselves.

Alex: I like a lot of different music and I also like to make lots of different kinds of music. I think specifically with In Flux I wanted to make something that was a combination of loud, fast, pummeling D-beat, but also something that is kind of groovy and intricate. There is a totally different rush I get playing in a hardcore band than playing in a poppier kind of band. I love both but playing in bands like In Flux helps to get out a lot of aggression, pain, and anger that I think we all feel in different ways. But also I love all of the people in this band and they are some of my closest friends so it's great to make something with each other and spend time together.

Mac: None of my other bands let me do D-beats. I value working in a group dynamic where I feel like we all have similar interests and goals, and all have the opportunity to contribute parts. This band is much more cooperative than my other bands, so it's rewarding to start with a blank slate and then end up with a finished thing.

Shai: Doing vocals in a band is very cathartic. I've never done just vocals in a band before and I didn't realize that movement would play such a huge role in my expression and my part in the band. And screaming vulnerable lyrics about my experience that are really important to me is also therapeutic, like an outlet for releasing my anger. Its also very important to me that I am not performing to a bunch of hardcore men that think it's okay to crowd kill and overstep marginalized peoples boundaries. That is so boring! Fuck that. This music is for the people who feel like they don't fit into hardcore.

**MRR: I know the culture in the PNW is to not dance or move around as much. Do you like that about the culture here or is it weird being a punk band with that dynamic?**

Rani: I tend to not look at anyone when I play. I tend to just look at Shai, Alex, or Mac just cause I'm shy and looking at people makes me nervous. So I actually don't notice if people are moving or not.

Mac: I think it sucks. I think people should move. If they want to, if they're not going to hurt anybody or put people in positions they don't want to be in. I wish people would move around more.

Alex: I am also very pro-movement as long it's not hurting anyone and is being cautious of other people. It sucks that people don't move at all really at shows here unless it's a really popular band.

Shai: It doesn't bother me that people don't move. People should do whatever they feel like they want to do. But, it is more fun when people seem like they enjoy it. When we were on tour, a lot of people would move around at shows and it just feels better. But as far as your question about the Northwest, in Olympia people are into dancing and moshing in a really cool, respectful way.

**MRR: Who writes the lyrics?**

Shai: I do. One time, Rani and I sat down and wrote lyrics on being mixed race which was cool, but I haven't used those yet.

My inspiration for lyrics comes from an array of experiences in my life that seem important to me or feels therapeutic to scream, including depression, death, fucked up family dynamics, strength through solidarity and friendship, being genderqueer, toxic friendships, and being over the patriarchal bullshit I deal with every day.

**MRR: Why was your demo called *No More Macho Bullshit*?**

All: Ummm...

**MRR: Did anyone here name that album?**

Shai: Mac, I think you came up with it.

Mac: Really?

Shai: I have a lyric that says "*your macho bullshit's boring as hell.*"

Mac: I think if I came up with it, then that's where I got it from.

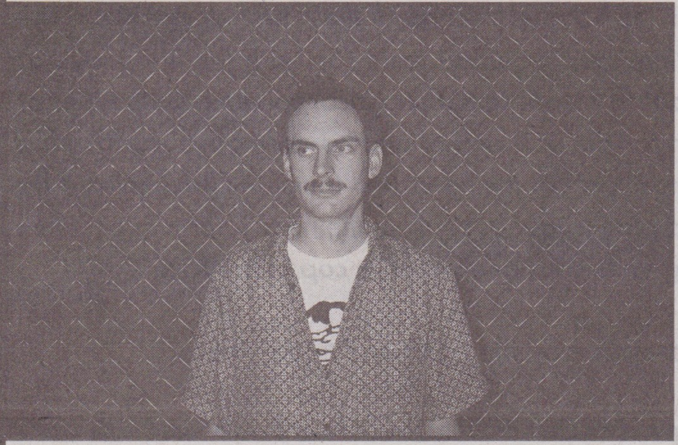
Rani: So we got it from ourselves.

Mac: Yeah, this band called In Flux inspired me.

Shai: That lyric comes from just being really tired of seeing so much macho culture, especially in the scenes that I choose to surround myself with. I would hope that that wouldn't happen but it does and it's just fucking boring. And it's tiring and it makes me sad and angry all the time.

**MRR: You said some of your lyrics are about solidarity and friendship. Why do you think that's important right now in Portland and Olympia, now?**

Shai: We're just brought up to be so isolated and we're fed that individualization is the way to survive. I see people in my life that are like that, afraid of trusting one another. It's fucked up and it's sad. Things are traumatic and things



are hard, life is traumatic. And when you're dealing with that every day support is so crucial. I think solidarity through friendship really helps me to survive.

Rani: I totally agree with that. I also grew up in a family where I was told not to depend on anyone and that people will let you down and I wouldn't be here without my friends and nourishing relationships in my life. I see it as crucial to my survival.

Mac: One of the biggest moments I had becoming an adult after college was realizing that I can make more friends and count on them for survival and not like everyone else I was seeing from high school just siphon off into their own little worlds. I could have a supportive network and that wasn't something I had to give up just to be part of "normal society."

Alex: Friends are so vital and one of the most important things in life. I definitely don't think I'd be here today without my friends.

**MRR: What are some of the other major passions you devote your time to in your community?**

Rani: Is my dog an acceptable answer?

**MRR: Yeah!**

Rani: My dog. So much time on my dog. He has a lot of health issues!

Mac: He looks pretty sick.

Rani: He has a weird little hotdog body. My dog. Also, school. I'm in school for social work and I've been thinking a lot about how one thing I want to study more on my own is looking at decolonization and post-colonial theory and how that effects and can possibly intersect with mental health. I'm still figuring all that out and finding language around it but it's something I've been spending time on.

Mac: I like cooking a lot. I made crunch wraps the other day.

Alex: I like riding my bike a lot. I like being outside and being in the woods. That's something I've been focusing on a lot, just spending a lot of time outside. Playing in a lot of bands. I want to do more organizing in Portland. I've lived here for a year and I did a lot of organizing when I lived in Chicago but I haven't done a lot here. I've tried to organize with a few different groups and it hasn't really worked out but I'd like to start doing something else. I'm not sure what yet.

Mac: You should start deorganizing.

Alex: Just riot…

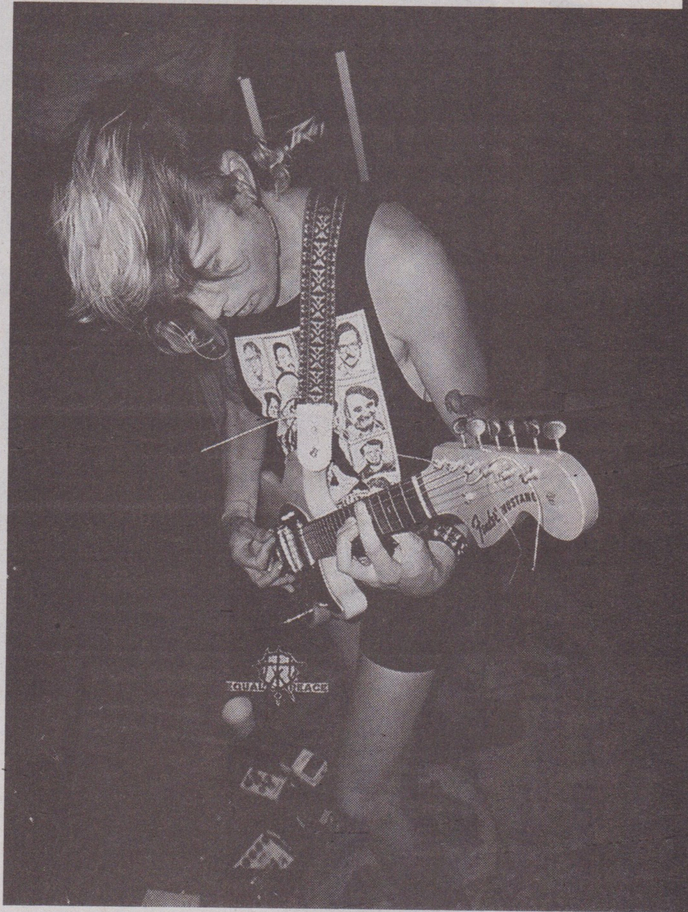
Shai: I just recently moved to Olympia so I spend a lot of time just working or trying to cultivate friendships and playing music. Being outside, enjoying the woods, and studying herbalism. Watching *The L-Word*.

**MRR: Alex, what kinds of organizing did you do in Chicago?**

Alex: I was on the collective that organized Fed Up Fest, a queer / trans punk fest, in 2014 and 2015. It was an intense experience to say the least but also infinitely rewarding and probably one of the coolest things I've been a part of. I don't think I'm as interested now in organizing a fest like that based on identity for some reasons, but maybe doing a fest of some kind in the future would be fun. I was also a part of Chicago ABC, which does prisoner support. Rani and I talked about trying to start a Black & Pink chapter in Portland a while ago, maybe if we both find some time that can be actualized at some point.

**MRR: Rani, what social work are you doing right now in Oregon? Has it been a good experience so far?**

Rani: I started a masters of social work program in September, and before that I was working primarily with older adults, mostly in the



70–90s age range. Now I'm teaching a sexual violence prevention curriculum in a few local high schools and doing crisis response. Being in school for social work is both strange and challenging. My goal is to be a therapist and examine how generational trauma and strength reside in our bodies, as well as a few other things I'm still finding the language for. And I also wanna acknowledge that the roots of social work are pretty fucked up, and it's still something I'm learning about and grappling with.

I honestly don't know if the program has been a good experience so far. I was warned before I started that it would be difficult for someone with a particular set of politics and identities, and that warning has proven to be true. Parts of it have been good. Like, I enjoy talking with teenagers because there's an openness and intensity of feeling that's beautiful and refreshing. The parts that have been hard are mostly because of my own classmates. I've gotten into several fights with a few folks, usually when something like white supremacy comes up. My impression so far is that there are a whole lot of white liberals with a whole lot of guilt that they don't want to move past. I guess one of the more disappointing, but unsurprising, things is that no one in my classes backs me up when these arguments break out. So it's been hard to find friends or allies within my school peer group.

**MRR: I've been hearing a lot of people talk about so many things they are going to have to do in the next four years under this fascist regime. Do you have ideas of what you're going to do to get through it, or advice? What the hell do we do?**

Mac: Everything I'm mentally preparing for is how to use my privilege as a white cis-dude that comes from a middle-class family. To extend my privileges and figure out how to let people take advantage of that or use that to help people. I guess, like, concretely now I'm just mentally preparing myself because I don't even know what the changes will be. It's a big old gamble right now.

Alex: Start buying food and storing it in your basement.

Shai: In case the rev comes.

**MRR: I think it's here…**

Alex: But also it's interesting to me that it seems like a lot of people who don't normally care about anything have suddenly cared a little more since Trump won the presidency. Different people are physically mobilizing more and getting out there more which I think is interesting and maybe a good thing in some ways. What could be good about that is that maybe we can steer some of those people, especially some of the privileged people who are upset with what's going on. Maybe steering them into giving money to different organizations or people who need it, or having them use their resources that they have to help people. Like instead of donating $32,000 to the Pearl District in Portland to fix their fucking windows, giving that to trans people who won't have their hormones or people who needs sleeping bags and tents who are homeless.

I want to stay even more committed to my friends than I was before. Really be there for people or go the extra mile, whether it's helping people get the healthcare they need or resources they need. Just being there for each other because no one else is going to be. Or they'll be against us.

Rani: What resources do I have access to and what resources will I have access to in the future and how I can spread that around? I think those relationships and those friendships are going to be vital to our collective survival.

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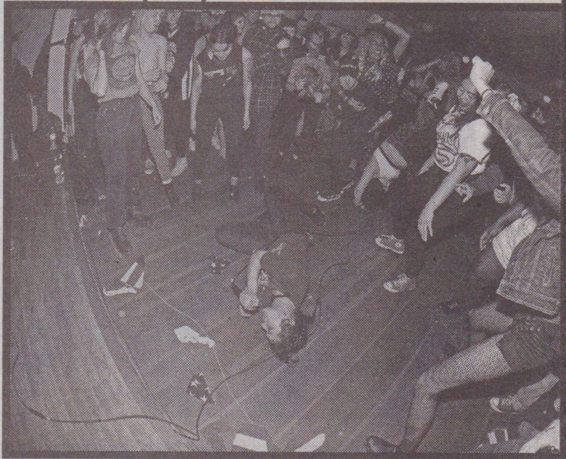

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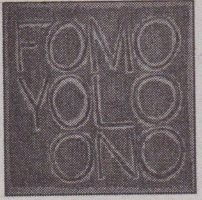


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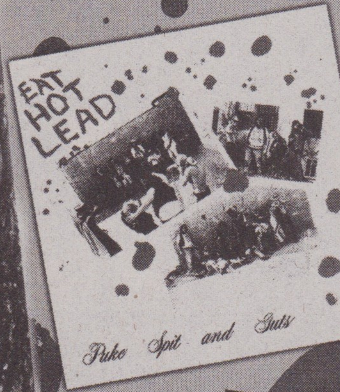


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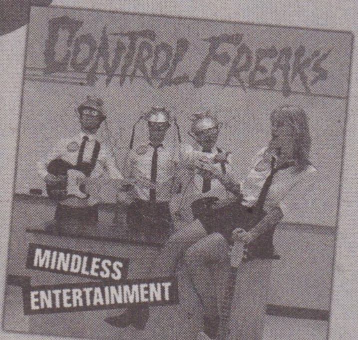


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# LOS FASTIDIOS

*The Fastidios are an Italian band that formed in Verona in 1991, who haven't stopped making noise since. Their name loosely translates to "the Bothers." Anti-fascist animal rights activists, woke to the possibility that another world is possible, the Fastidios and their music transmit a zest for life and strength to audiences few bands can touch. Their voice blows in like a strong gust of wind, an unchained expression which flows despite attempts to repress and extinguish it.*

*Translator's note: Given the difference in social structure and history in Europe and the USA, certain terms such as "social center" or "anti-fascist" might be outside the reader's frame of reference. A social center is a self-governed, non-profit, collective mixed-use space which is often but not always an illegal squat, run on a voluntary basis, which serves as a meeting ground for political activism, social aid, and cultural activities, a "third space" beyond traditional social aid and economic models. "Anti-fascist" activists are a nebulously defined social and political counterculture with leftist, socialist, or anarchist leanings, most visible in European countries marked by the not so distant memory of fascist dictatorship, such as Spain, Italy and Germany. Bridging the gap between the North American political and social activists and other global resistance movements has never been so necessary, for obvious reasons.*

*Interview and introduction by Ana Hurtado. Translation by Cordelia Brodsky.*

**MRR: Enrico, the Fastidios was founded in Verona in 1991, but a lot has happened since then. There are new members and changes. Can you tell us a bit about the evolution of the band?**
It's true, twenty-five years have gone by as a group. I couldn't imagine when we started that we were still going to be touring with the band twenty-five years later. Obviously over the years there have been some lineup changes. We have been officially active with the current lineup for a year. The newest arrival was the drummer, who joined us in December of 2015 and started playing with us in January of 2016. He comes from Reggio Emilia, a city near Verona, and I met him thanks to our bass player Luca, who comes from Parma, and joined the band two years ago. And a year and a half ago, a guitarist also joined the band. Fortunately, we have lots of concerts. This year we have played hundreds, and have plenty more planned. We just released a new album, and before that we released an album which collects twenty-five years of our trajectory. It contains unreleased songs and some live material from the Open Air for Open Minds Festival we played last July in Germany.

**MRR: How is the alternative music scene for you in Spain and in Europe? Where do you usually play? Bars, social centers, concert halls...?**
Historically the Fastidios were born and raised out of the Italian social center scene. We have grown parallel to our local reality, with a certain antagonism. Right now we play in different places: social centers, local bars...We don't have a set type of venue. Regarding the scene, this is probably not the best time. Compared to the early '90s, the punk scene was much better back then. Today in Italy, it's difficult for groups like ours. The Italian independent music scene has huge limits, and if you don't enter the commercial music circuit, you are always going to be of secondary importance, unable to gain access to a certain level of success. Getting to the top is almost impossible for independent Italian artists.

But we are still proud to be independent and convinced we can overcome the limits imposed by the system. Personally, I feel like step-by-step we will succeed.

This is not the best time, as I said before, but still there are many new groups being formed. In our country, it's hard to find local venues, but people are excited to get together to play. The new groups of the younger generation are working hard to bring the scene back to its former glory. We are optimistic; personally I have always counted on a brighter future even through tough times.

When we tour around Europe, it's a bit different than in Italy. If you think of it, Italy is the country where the fewest books, songs, and records are sold in all of Europe. Anywhere else we go in the rest of Europe we find a much more organized scene and more spaces for this type of music.

Today, as in the past, we continue to support an independent scene, focused on autonomy, both politically and musically.

That has been our ethos from the start and how we want to continue.

**MRR: You have a record label: KOB. What bands have you recorded? What are you listening to? What are your influences?**

KOB Records was formally created in Verona in 1998. It was born from a previous label that I managed. In 1996 I opened an independent music store and in 1998 KOB Records released its first record.

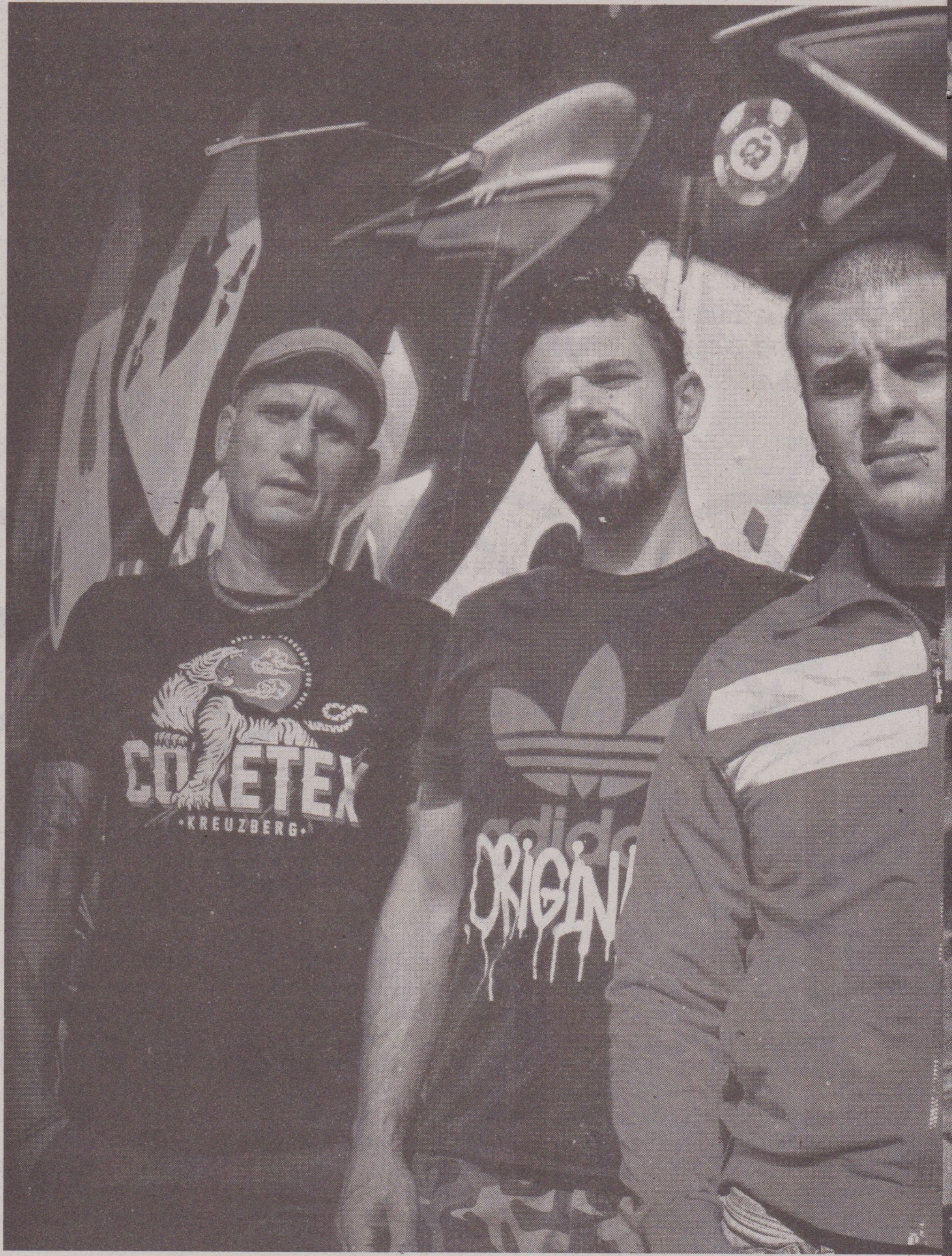
Over the last 20 years we've released 136 productions with bands from all over Europe, but mainly Italian artists. We have recorded the Fastidios, the Lumpen, and many other groups. With this label we have tried to promote certain musical genres that unfortunately in Italy do not have sufficient exposure.

The label has always been dedicated to Oi!, ska, and punk in general. The label, like its bands, has declared itself to be openly anti-fascist. Today we continue putting stuff out after 20 years, not as much as we used to, as it is not the best period for independent labels, but we have plenty to keep us busy with the Fastidios. Right now we are set to release a ska album from a band from Milan that will get people talking. As I mentioned before, we produced Lumpen's last album—they are an Oi! group from Cosenza—as well Italian ska band Cantiniero's latest release. In collaboration with other labels, we produced the latest work of the Offenders, a German-Italian ska group. In general, we love to work with this type of music. We are satisfied with what we've done at KOB from its beginning until now. We have given a voice to many bands that would have had a hard time finding one.

**MRR: Is there a place you would you like to play with the Fastidios that you haven't gone to yet?**

We are ready to go wherever they want us! Last year we were in South America and it was a wonderful experience. It's a beautiful thing to travel to places that are miles away but share a similar passion and attitude when you take a closer look. The problems, the thoughts, the battles, and the hardships are the same. We don't set limits when it comes to travel. We are a 100% live band and prepared to get out there and play today just like we were 20 years ago. With our heads held high, with humility, ready to play where they call us, even in difficult situations. Over the years we have been really lucky, but I still get goosebumps thinking back on the first time we went to Russia. We were the first foreign anti-fascist band that played in Russia, and in a difficult situation. Even so, we were very happy because from that first concert onwards the scene began to take off, and the anti-fascist scene has grown. Everything has sprung up thanks to the strength of music. Since that concert, many kids have found the enthusiasm to get out there and make it happen. We always do things face-to-face, in the first person, and we will keep on going even through tough times. You only live once, so you should be fierce and proud, and not give up working for what you believe in. I plan on sticking to the same path I've been on for the last twenty-five years.

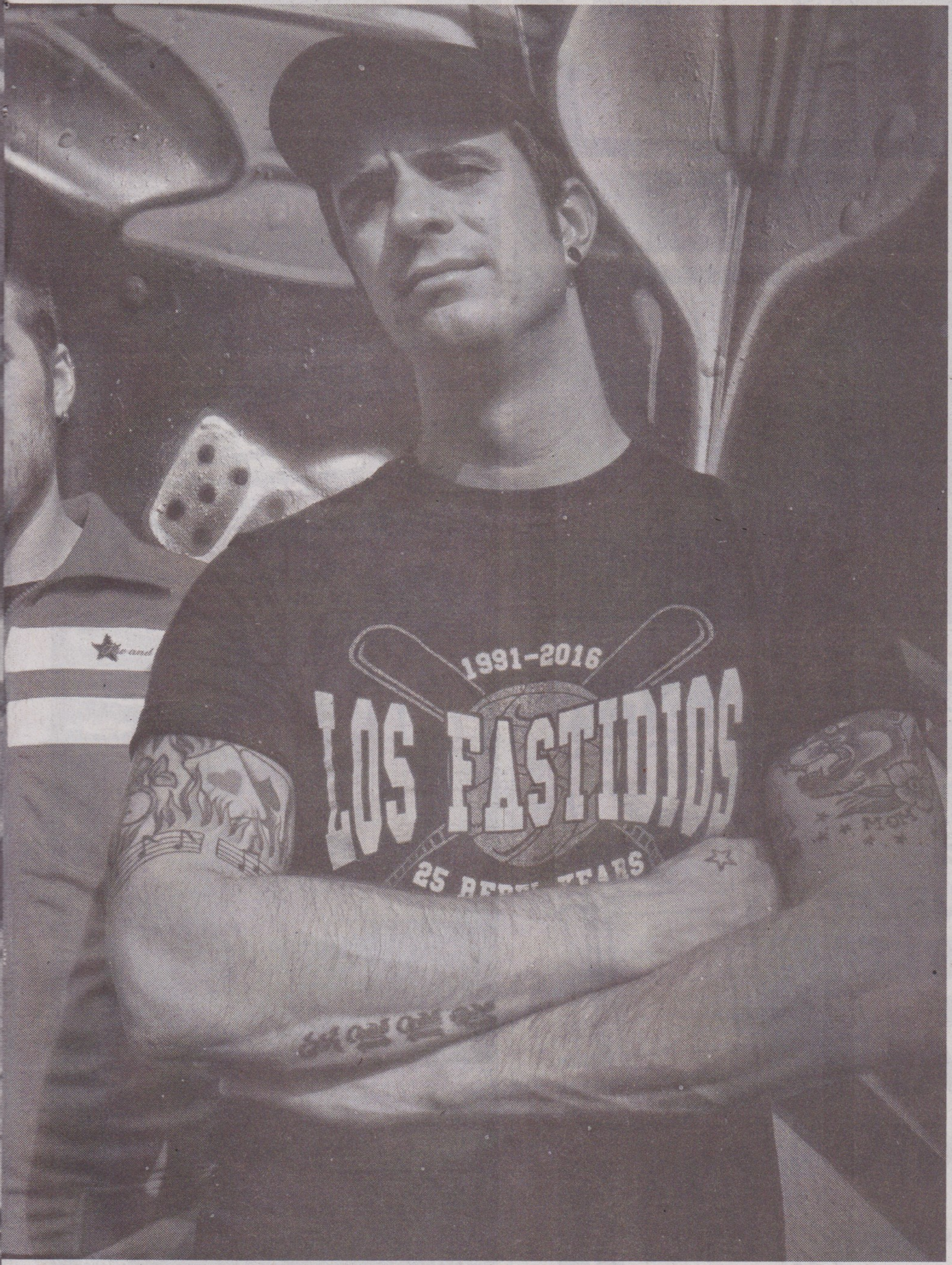
**MRR: Can you tell us a bit about veganism and anti-speciesism? In recent times it seems like these movements have become trendy, and gained a lot of new followers. But beyond their recent**




**trendiness, these movements represent the consciousness of people who have been leading this lifestyle for years, and really embody the philosophy...**

Currently, terms like animalism, anti-speciesism and veganism might be fashionable. As far as I'm concerned, these kinds of fads will always come and go. That being said, I am very happy that this kind of thought is becoming more mainstream.

I'd rather see this type of thought become trendy than others, as these movements are very important to me personally. The Fastidios are foremost a group that fights for animal rights. It is fundamental to fight for human rights, but at the same time I believe that we must fight for the animal rights, as they cannot defend themselves. They only have us to defend them. The basic impulse of any social justice movement is to try to give voice to those who have no voice. It is my battle to support the weakest, in this case the animals, who are the first victims of this system. For me everything starts from here. If this planet was based on respect for the animal world, there would be a much more tolerance for human diversity as well. I embraced the animalist philosophy many years ago when there were still few who spoke out on this subject, and I feel lucky to have done so.




I always associate my good luck with music, as I mentioned before, as it has allowed me to travel abroad and spend time in the north of Europe, where animalism, animal rights and anti-speciesism were already talked about even twenty years ago. Knowing what was happening outside of Italy allowed me to open my eyes to what was going on and quickly wake up. For us as a group, it was one of the most important issues to address. Since our earliest works, we talked about respect for the animal world. Nowadays this subject might be fashionable, but I hope that this trend is here to stay. It's like when you say that punk is fashionable—it's better to talk about punk than not to talk about it. I have never been closed in any social or political bubble and have always preferred to be open.

**MRR: Despite capitalism giving us everything just a click away, sometimes it seems that something is missing, that we have become dehumanized...**

Absolutely, the global system is leading us in a very ugly direction. Look at the new president of the United States: a sexist, racist, homophobic man...living through his election we can imagine where things are headed. My experience helps me to always look forward with positivity and optimism towards everything and in every situation. Even when you feel like your drowning, you can get things on the right track. This is what allows us to wake up and open our eyes. Sometimes the most difficult times are the ones that that give you the new stimuli necessary to be reborn.

You must become aware and stay active, no matter how small or unimportant your actions might seem. I think this is the only way we can make a better world.

The most important thing is to sustain international solidarity and never lose sight of the struggles that exist in every moment in the world. However small they may seem, they need us. The Fastidios always tries to give voice to causes that can't find one. Fortunately, our movement lives on in solidarity. Subcomandante Marcos in particular has inspired me so much with how he lived, how he always stayed positive. I think at this moment the scene is a bit fractured and needs to be unified.

We must overcome every obstacle, every problem and unite against fascism and racism in the spirit of international cooperation. Even though every individual is on their own path, working together is very important. Another world is possible and no one can take our dreams away if we dream big. Keep moving forward with your head held high.

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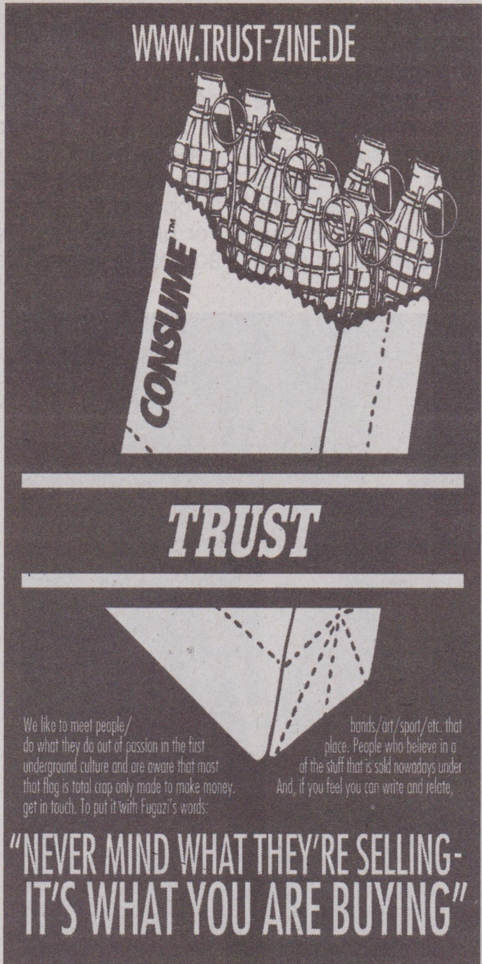
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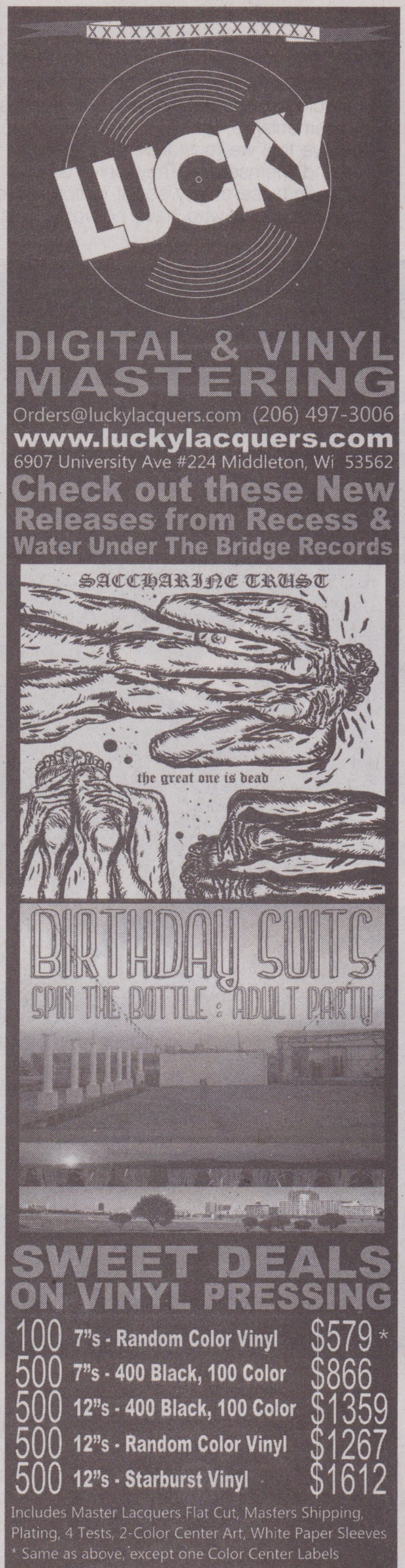
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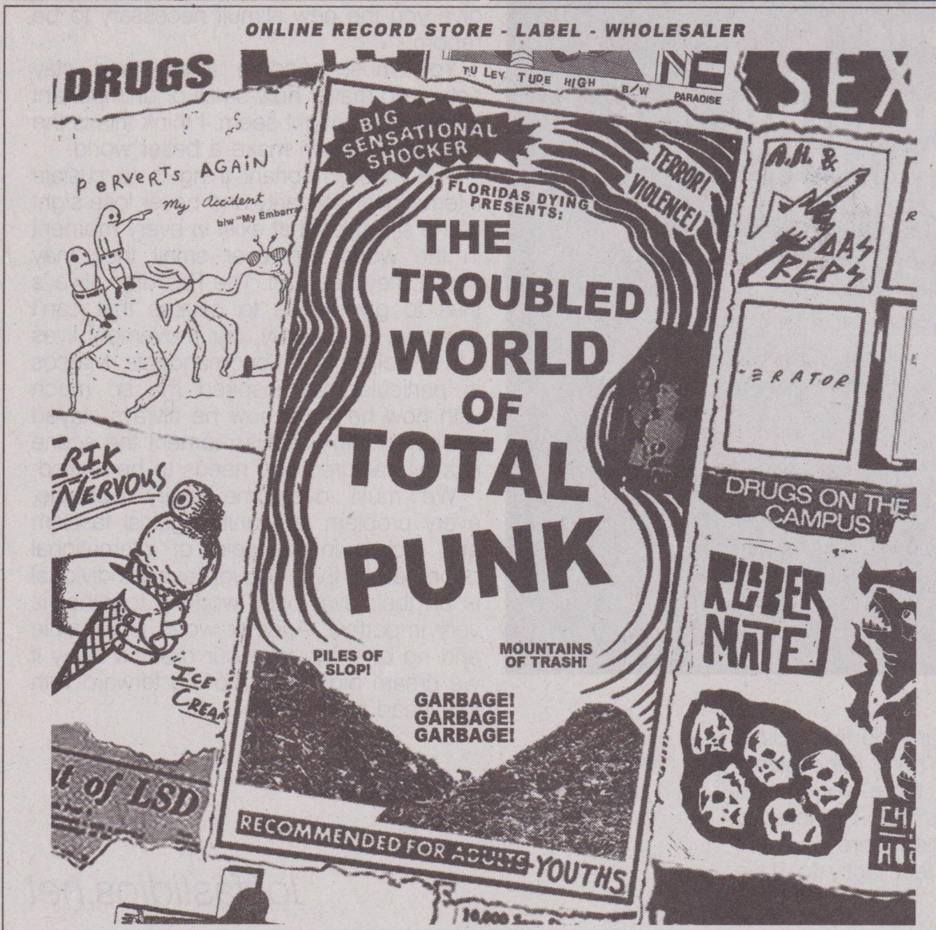
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# mydolls

**INTERVIEW, INTRODUCTION, AND PHOTOS BY HEATHER L. JOHNSON. PHOTOS ALSO PROVIDED BY GREG RABEL AND DAVID ENSMINGTER.**

**TRISH HERRERA (*VOCALS / GUITAR*)**

**GEORGE REYES (*DRUMS*)**

**DIANNA RAY (*BASS / VOCALS*)**

**LINDA YOUNGER (*GUITAR / VOCALS*)**

*Cypress, Texas. 1985: I was one of those awkward suburban girls trapped by geography, hormones and the grave misunderstandings of my football-playing, skin-tight designer jean-wearing peers. I took it all out on my bedroom walls, pasting up cutouts of hot young boys from TEEN magazine and hair band musicians with cucumbers in their pants, abject byproducts of an extreme desire to fit in. There was always something missing, some chasm lacking form or language keeping me from becoming that carbon copied Barbie Doll I thought I was supposed to be.*

*Then a few things happened. Glorious things revealing a gorgeous yet hideous underside of life that rang true. My mother gave me her old car (a necessity in '80s Houston, when taking the bus meant a four-hour round trip to anywhere). With that came access to new experiences and ideas...and to a tribe of people unafraid to live fully, read between the lines and make art about what they found there.*

*This is how I first found Mydolls, a Houston-based, nearly all-female punk band that had been playing since 1978. Though they'd stopped performing by the time I was old enough to see them, their spirit had imprinted upon the Houston underground music scene to the degree that even random kids from distant suburbs were inspired by them. Their sound, an explosive mix of Au Pairs, the Slits, X-Ray Spex, and early Siouxsie and the Banshees influences, was layered with something else—something hilarious but deadly serious, cutting yet colored by a love and self-respect that could only spring from the familial, from friendship bonds so tight each person finishes the other's sentences. A "something else" springing from the obstinacy required to thrive in mid-80's Houston, in all of its swampy, concrete, billboard grazed, freeway-strangled, police-brutality tainted glory.*

*Mydolls's very existence helped me find and fight for my own voice as a young girl. The title of their collection,* A World of Her Own *(a compilation of singles and early material released in 2007) couldn't express that more clearly.*

*Still together after 39 years, all four original members have granted us theirs.*

***MRR: When I think of Houston in 1978, I try to imagine it prior to the Reagan years, but at the height of the Cold War. The oil industry there was booming; disco and stadium rock filled the Top 40 airwaves. How did you find each other and what motivated you to start a band?***

TRISH HERRERA: The Texas scene was small. We found each other through innate recognition. No one said, "Hey, I hate Reagan, let's start a band." We just knew that together we could be a voice and we all had the same drive for disruption and change.

GEORGE REYES: I think there was a lot going on pre-Reagan. The police were out of control in Houston. So it was a real shock to see [Trish's] cousin's picture in *Time* magazine related to the police and the repression they dealt out during the 1970s. The Moody Park riots were also a reaction to police brutality.

DIANNA RAY: The physical genesis of the band came from Trish and myself, but the impulse that drove it started many years earlier for me. I love all forms of art, something my mother gifted me, but music draws my most visceral response. I was a loner kid with a rich

interior life; music became my companion. Years later, Trish and I were seeing shows at the Island, Houston's only punk club back in 1978, and one day we were standing in front of the stage after a band had finished. Impulsively, we decided to form one. We knew a lot of people playing music and it seemed natural.

LINDA YOUNGER: Divine Providence...I felt it then and I feel it now. There was a reason we met, formed a band and stayed together for all these years. The story continues to unfold.

***MRR: What were you all listening to and thinking about that underscored this motivation?***

TRISH: We didn't agree with the general population's apathy toward politics, war, attacks on LGBT people, or women's rights. Using religion to back up hate was starting to become an American pastime.

GEORGE: Seems like there was global unrest. The news was always bad and the music we were listening to reflected economic and political malaise.

DIANNA: I can't say I had a conscious political motivation when we first started, though that quickly surfaced. I was emotionally gutted by the Vietnam War, which heavily influenced my social and political beliefs. Having come from Michigan, where music was almost a religion, I was introduced to Iggy and the Stooges, the New York Dolls, Patti Smith and the Ramones. Then came post-punk. What a revelation that was! Au Pairs, the Raincoats, the Slits, Lora Logic, PIL, Joy Division, The Pop Group, wow!

LINDA: I have always listened to a wide variety of music and still do, but Flipper, Iggy Pop and the Stooges, Lou Reed and the Velvet Underground, the Raincoats, the Slits, Siouxsie and the Banshees and the Cramps were some of my faves at that time.

***MRR: Was there anything in particular about Houston that made you make and perform "disruptive" music?***

TRISH: Anger and a desire to bring attention to political and social issues was fueled into song and performance. It was just the next step for us.

GEORGE: I think Joe Campos Torres' death really galvanized a segment of Houston, while the rest of the city was enamored with Gilley's and "Urban Cowboy."

DIANNA: I have to agree with George on how galvanizing Joe Campos Torres's murder was. He was a 23-year-old Vietnam veteran murdered by six Houston Police officers. They beat him and pushed him into the bayou where he drowned. His body was found two days later. Two of the officers were tried for murder and found guilty of negligent homicide. They received one year of probation and a $1 fine. It was an insult. The sentencing sparked riots in Houston's Moody Park, crystallized and personalized divisions between ordinary citizens and those in power. It was time to push back.

LINDA: Sadly, what makes our music timeless are these recurring events. Racism, sexism, police brutality... Clubs like the Island provided safe havens, where freedom of expression was embraced. And much of that was in the form of angry, fast, loud music.

***MRR: During the early '80s you guys toured around the country, appearing in Wim Wenders' film Paris, Texas and more. What made you stay in Houston rather than relocate to LA, NYC, or even Austin for a bigger chance at financial success or notoriety? What was at the center of this experience for each of you?***

TRISH: Punk was a boys' world in the big picture. Although our local punk men supported us, women were generally still front singers with cute gimmicks. Three women dressed in black, shouting and pointing out social misnomers and political injustice was not popular.

GEORGE: I don't think financial success or notoriety played a big part in our decisions. We wanted to share the music with larger audiences but not at the expense of creativity. Linda's interview with John Peel on BBC Radio really expresses what we were about. I love Peel's comment on "the demands of the audience." We play what we want to play and let the audience find us.

DIANNA: We had a pretty great scene going on in Houston. It was a vibrant mix of music, artists, fashion and politics. I'd call being able to live and play music with the likes of Really Red, the Degenerates, Legionaire's Disease, the Dicks, the Big Boys, Butthole Surfers, Culturcide, artists like Mel Chin, Jack Livingston, James Surls, and William Steen pretty damn successful. Cultural currency was way more important than dollar currency.

LINDA: I think we each have different reasons why Houston is home for us. For me, it's family and friends. Our recent performances at Lawndale Art Center (formerly Lawndale Art Annex) and Contemporary Art Museum Houston brought "our Tribe" together to celebrate our musical journey in a way that just can't be described in words. It was a feeling of unconditional love, total acceptance and appreciation for our legacy. We're currently working on a documentary with Cressandra Thibodeaux and 14 Pews, and I am blown away by the incredible footage of us at various performances, practicing with Amos, Dianna's dog (our howling back up on the song "Politician"), and all the interviews being conducted. Much more to come on that labor of love.

***MRR: Fears of a nuclear apocalypse permeated so much of our culture during the early / mid '80s; I remember its possibility creating a constant tension, bleeding into films, music and television to the degree that it affected the tone of everyday life. How did that influence your choices of what to write, play and record during that time, if at all?***

TRISH: In the '80s, American cruise missiles were being planted in our ally countries. The United States was becoming unpopular all over the world for our mongering. We felt that while traveling in England. It was and is never the people's choice to go to war and kill our young men and women. The government decides that. This powerlessness and victimization afflicted by our own country created a ping-pong subculture starting with beatniks in the '50s responding to the Russian Commie scare. We fight back with words and song; we are responsible to speak up.

GEORGE: Anarchy was a big theme, although not too many people knew what that was. You could still discount people's views by calling them "Commies," but anarchist, what the hell was that? It really was underground. I recall having to use a secret password to get into the Anarchist Press in London. These experiences came out in our music. The marching snare in "Politician" and the apocalyptic guitar riffs demonstrate how much chaos was surrounding us.

DIANNA: I was more influenced by actual bombs going off in Northern Ireland and Beirut, the insane violence of religion in these countries and in South America with the Jonestown Massacre. How religion was used to manipulate, oppress and separate people. Those are some of the thoughts that came out lyrically in our song, "Soldiers of a Pure War."

LINDA: It makes me sad that things seem to be heading in the same direction with regard to nuclear threats and the "bullying" mentality permeating the air right now. At least we know that duck and cover is not going to protect us anymore.

***MRR: How did the rise of hardcore affect your music? Did the audience change, and did they remain receptive to you? Did it transform your own attitudes toward performing?***

TRISH: There is a degree of disconnect. Some feel punk is kid stuff and don't

participate anymore. Those people may be living more conservative lives but are still punk rock in attitude. Mydolls audiences range from 5-year-olds to 105-year-olds—it's crazy but we seem to have a vast appeal like that.

GEORGE: I recall Bob Weber's 50-something uncle coming to a Butthole Surfers show we were performing at, who really got into slam dancing. Hardcore was out there along with a lot of other creative expression. Audiences react to what's on stage. They're not too picky when something engages them.

DIANNA: I think the hardcore scene had a more profound effect on me as an audience member than as a musician. I enjoyed the playful skanking and moshing we did before the really young hardcore boys hit the scene; after that it became very aggressive in the pit. I weighed 100 lbs and couldn't compete with someone twice my weight, all muscle and not looking out for me. Early on we took care of each other. If you started to fall, someone was there to pick you up before you even hit the floor. No one was rough—it was playful and joyous, even during the hardcore shows.

I will say this—at a recent show here in Houston I watched you, Heather, crouched in front of the stage taking photos, and a gentleman scooted right in behind you and kept the moshers back so they wouldn't hurt you. I thanked him afterwards. I'd like to see more of that! We can all have fun and do it in a way that is respectful and allows everyone to be engaged.

LINDA: Our music has a hardcore message delivered a little differently. The punch is more subtle, almost poetic. I think the music and audience always evolve. The attitude to encourage others to "Go Make a Band!" remains.

Mydolls audiences start earlier than five-year-olds. My granddaughter, Molly, has been a Mydolls fan since infancy. She is three now and recently performed live on stage with us at Cactus Music, a local record store in Houston. She loves practicing "Totally Wired" [Mydolls' cover of a song by the Fall] and is a constant reminder that we have a moral responsibility to keep our message loud and clear, and to pass the baton to the next generation. We nurture our future hardcore performers while maintaining love and respect for those who have been with us from the beginning. We met a whole new generation of hardcore punks at Take This Fest and Shove It [a music festival featuring mostly Houston and Texas-based bands that occurred in April of this year]. It reinforces the need to keep playing and to support others in performing as well.

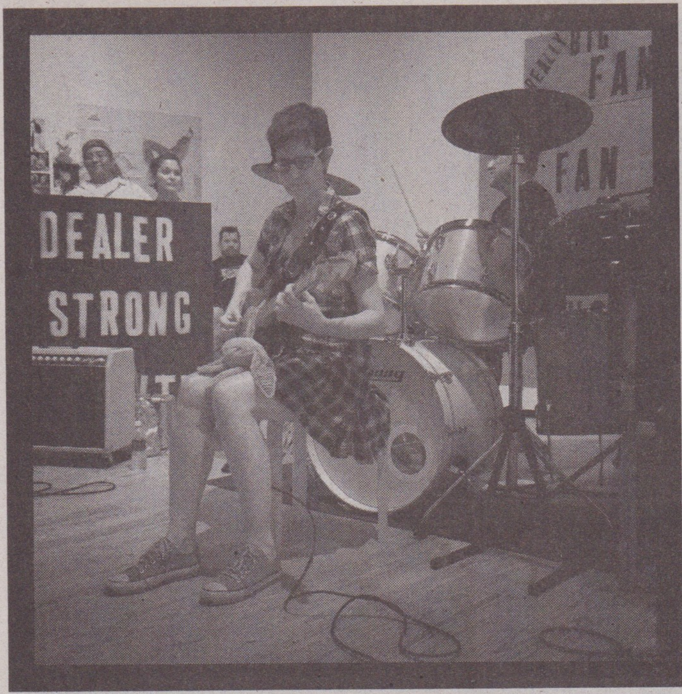
***MRR: You have been, for all 39 of your years, a mostly female band, operating in a very male-dominated music scene. Is this something you all were conscious of, and if so, what gave you the guts to dive in?***

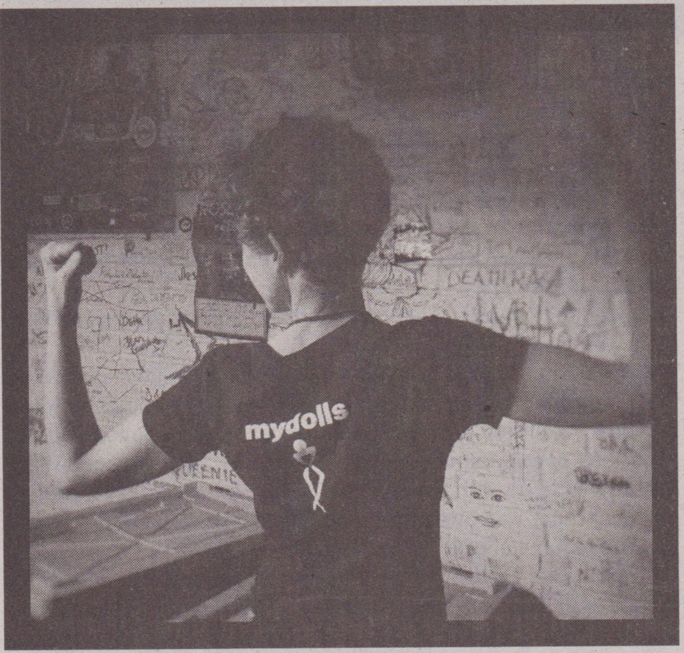
TRISH: I don't think we really thought about our femaleness at that point. We were just doing it.

GEORGE: I don't know if it was the personal connections with male musicians or that women's music was developing, but our reception was very positive. I can't recall that we labored over conscious considerations of being dominated by a scene. That might have to do with the fact that we were focused on creating music and not worrying about who headlined. We still think that way. We're just happy to be there and play.

DIANNA: It was probably more naiveté than guts. We looked for a female drummer before we found Georoge, so our original intention was to be an all-female band. It was more of a novelty back in the '80s than it is now. Thankfully there are so many more gender-integrated bands these days that we're almost at a place where we don't single people out for special attention based on their gender. We aren't there yet. That is one of the reasons we're involved in the Girls Rock Camp organization. We want to see more women pick up instruments, learn how to run sound, write songs, form bands and book shows. We also have a new female collective in Houston that books shows, supports one another's creative endeavors and keeps venues safe for women, called DAMN GXRL. Female audience members and performers experience a shockingly high amount of sexual inappropriateness from industry people and audience members. That really needs to change—for Christ sakes, it's 2017! It's called R-E-S-P-E-C-T. We're a tribe and we take care of each other. Predators have no place and should be called out for their behavior.

LINDA: It was not on my radar screen. Sexist promoters and club owners asking for men to collect our money at the end of nights did piss me off and bring the issue to the forefront. I am very supportive





music well into their fifties and sixties. Punk music. I think it keeps us young. We have found the fountain of youth!

LINDA: We have learned the value of good dialogue before agreeing to play, and we make sure that compensation and equipment availability are clear up front. Older and wiser, we recognize the need to have someone like Nancy Agin Dunnahoe with Neon Artifact and Wild Dog Archives as our press agent, who keeps us focused with our eye on the prize.

***MRR: You've just released a new record, It's Too Hot for Revolution, in one of the strangest moments of modern times, with an unpopular "strongman" in the presidential seat, whose actions and policies are bringing about renewed fears of nuclear war. At the same time, I've witnessed an unbelievable spirit of love and optimism emanating from people who attend your shows, who range so greatly in age. What are your hopes for this new album in terms of how it will be received by this new / old audience?***

TRISH: *It's Too Hot for Revolution* is all about apathy. It's about getting off our couches. Put down the remotes and phones and get out to some shows. Mydolls rails against the puppet and we hope for goodness and fairness in our future.

GEORGE: I think we are hoping it motivates people to action. The lyrics to the title cut offend many groups, laced with micro-aggressions for several. I think in today's climate, there is a great need to be intentional and deliberate. I'm glad that love and optimism are being spun at our shows but I think we'd like to see a counter to apathy.

DIANNA: We're really proud of the record; it was a labor of love by many. One side is softer in its musical and lyrical tone. It has songs about love and personal struggles. One is especially personal to us: "Don't Fucking Die." It's about cancer, which has and continues to affect each of us in the band through our own diagnoses and cures, as well as friends who are newly diagnosed and those we have lost to the disease. *Fuck cancer.*

The other side of the EP is more political and biting. Trish changes some of the words when we perform to better align with what is happening in the moment. Capitalism without morals will eventually consume itself. It feels like we hit a new low every day. I am hoping for a correction, even an over-correction towards love and acceptance—because tolerance isn't good enough. We are a better people than our

of the current movement in Houston to address that.

***MRR: What was your first show like and how were you received?***
TRISH: We opened for the Hates at the Parade Disco and were not afraid at all, but our hardcore punk male supporters were a little nervous for us. Thanks to the kindness of the Hates we had a very successful show and were launched into the world with a lot of positive reception.
GEORGE: I think this show was part of an early Gay Pride Week performance. Again, I think we were happy to put the hours of practice into a performance. I lost my wedding ring at that show which may have been a sign on the direction I was taking and that of the band.
LINDA: The Hates welcomed us and we are grateful to Christian Kidd for that. We continue to experience that kindred spirit with them to this day. We are currently involved in fundraisers to pay it forward now. Christian is battling cancer, as are many of our fellow musicians and friends. The punk rock community is incredibly supportive, and so many have stepped forward to raise money to help him with medical expenses. We stand with them. Oh Cancer, Up Yours!

***MRR: George, what was it like to be the only guy in the band?***
GEORGE: Having already played in garage and cover bands, I came to Mydolls with a music background. Working with novices playing instruments and performing really minimized the ego-tripping I had experienced with other performers. I had to check my own ego in learning how to play with people who were totally focused on creating music and expressing themselves rather than developing an aura of stage presence. It's been interesting, especially on the road. I've adjusted to the time element (makeup, wardrobe, etc.) and have found opportunities to explore and write.

***MRR: Were you all initially accepting of one another's musicianship, tastes, etc... or were there growing pains?***
TRISH: We were all just having fun; we barely have tension. If it happens, it's just slight irritation about not being on the same schedule.
GEORGE: Since this was definitely a DIY formation, I would say that we all learned together. I accepted the recommendation to change from ride cymbal to floor tom rhythm. It has become signature to our music. I think as we have been out of sync from time to time, the irritation has been channeled into better performances.
DIANNA: Well, I had no experience playing a stringed instrument, nor any ability to read music, but I loved it and that was enough to start. The band made adjustments along the way. When we started we had a keyboard, which we dropped pretty quickly. We gave George a really hard time about playing too much snare and cymbal combos. We just kept telling him to hit the toms! He accepted the challenge of doing things differently, opening up as a drummer. He makes playing bass a lot of fun. In fact I think he makes me a better bass player.

Though we shared musical interests, we had different influences. Those differences helped us develop our own unique sound.
LINDA: We continue to challenge each other with the music, and this only makes it better. The fact that we have remained a band for so many years is a testament to our mutual respect and encouragement.

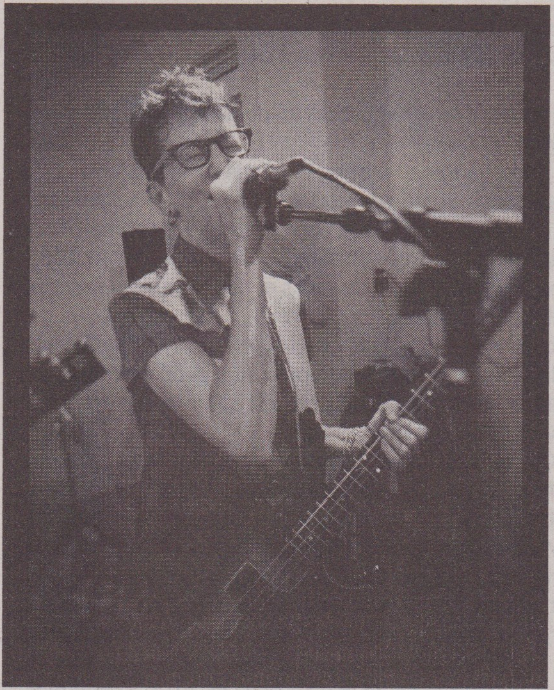
***MRR: Jumping forward to 2008...what inspired your re-emergence after a thirteen-year hiatus?***
TRISH: Dianna and I had been playing in bands all along, and Linda and George had taken some time off to have and raise children. It just seemed the next step. I was very disturbed by some of the legislation for LGBT rights and we talked a lot about that in 2008. Kathy Johnston was a miracle in helping us organize and pull together a full set and play some shows.
GEORGE: I recall that there was a birthday party Mydolls was requested to play. I know we wanted to present a good performance, so we organized some practices, dusted off some songs from our playlist and have been playing ever since.
DIANNA: In 2008 we were asked by Anna Garza and Rosa Guerrero to be a part of Noise and Smoke 2, a festival they and Liz Molina put together. That was about a year after we released the anthology double CD, *A World of Her Own*. The timing felt right and they were so sweet and earnest that it was impossible to say no.

Then we just kept at it. Kathy Johnston was playing with us as she had at the very end of our 1980s performances. She had a great ear, helped us relearn our material and added depth to our songs. Unfortunately we lost her to blood cancer back in 2011. Sometimes, in her honor, we set an empty chair for her on stage. I miss her every day.

***MRR: How had Houston changed and how had the punk scene there and in Texas changed? How did your voice as a band shift with age, and with the times?***
TRISH: The growth of Houston has affected small clubs and the independent music scene; the digital world has created a free market for music. So basically the only way independent bands make money is by selling records at shows or in independent cool record stores. (A shout out to all those stores who help us, and a special shout out to clubs giving us guarantees and support!)

We have had to learn to ask for payment, which is really hard when you grow up in a free-thinking punk rock world with a disdain for success. All our money pools back into recording and touring.
GEORGE: As times have changed, so have we. There are more Houston venues and a greater opportunity to perform to a larger audience. We played at the Houston Library last summer. We definitely have had to adapt to the electronic, social media world. I think as far as shifts go, we're building a legacy for girls and women to express themselves. And for the punk rock world, we continue to be a model of that same self-expression.
DIANNA: Houston's population had grown exponentially in the years we were on hiatus. Social media was on the rise, translating into an even more diverse audience, especially as it pertained to age. One of the things about punk rock that amazes me is its power to endure. With the Internet more young audiophiles everywhere have learned about obscure bands like ourselves. They share playlists and information, creating new audiences. I think we were very lucky to have lived during the first and second waves of punk, but the younger kids today are every bit as excited and innovative in their approach to music. They are also very supportive of each other's bands across genres.

When I was in my twenties I was more concerned with my image and how cool I was on stage. Now I just want to have fun, play music and pass out an abundance of hugs to friends in the audience, onstage and in other bands. We recently attended and played a festival called "Take This Fest and Shove It!" You were there Heather, and it makes me so happy to see how many we used to play shows with still making



country currently reflects. That is why I still cling to the optimism you referred to in your question. The best antidote for hate is love. And hugs, lots and lots of hugs! And dogs too. Dogs are great.

LINDA: We have gotten such positive feedback on our new red vinyl release. This album spans years of Mydolls music and tells our story over time. It starts with incredible cover art by friend and creative genius, Jack Livingston. Insert contains the lyrics and a Mydolls self-portrait by Trish from 1989. The song selection represents earlier recordings by our very special sound engineer Phil Davis done in 1982 on reel-to-reel tape, lovingly restored by Dan Workman at SugarHill Recording Studios, and re-engineered by Andy Bradley at Wire Road Studios. It is a true labor of love and we are so proud of how well it turned out.

***MRR: I'd love it if each of you would share a story. Some moment that crystallizes what this band means to you. It could be an interaction with an audience member, a moment on stage, or a personal experience inspiring lyrics to a song...whatever comes to mind first.***

TRISH: My favorite memory in the '80s is playing at the Island on Main Street when some of the ceiling tiles fell on my head. Kind of just says it all.

GEORGE: Margaret Moser and I go way back to a different time and place in Austin. We both worked at a restaurant in the mid '70s. Years later Mydolls played Raul's on the drag. Other than a tire being slashed by frat boys, the evening started with Margaret coming back stage and identifying herself to me as a former workmate. She ended by saying "now I am a famous editor and you are a famous musician." Didn't think much of it at the time, but I guess we are.

LINDA: My favorite memory is being interviewed on the John Peel BBC radio program in 1982. He was such an advocate and wanted to know all about Houston. I listen to the interview and smile at the questions and answers from the young, naïve Linda, and the warmth and wonderful sense of humor of someone we all loved and admired.

DIANNA: Music in general and playing it has literally saved my life. From times as a teen through my early twenties when I was suicidal, and recently while coping with the death of my wife and Mydolls's guitarist Kathy Johnston, it has given me companionship, creative and spiritual connection to the Universe, and the ability to exist in the moment while letting everything else fall away. It has brought and kept the most amazing people into my life: people like you, Heather; my bandmates in Mydolls; and those in the other band Trish and I play in, No Love Less.

Music forms a unique connection between the players, the thing itself and the listener. It is magical. A song can take us back to a specific time, place and feeling like nothing else. The notes become part of our DNA independent of whoever wrote it. I can't imagine a better or more potent gift.

*Houston, Texas. 2016: I left Houston in 1987, to return after 29 years. I'd lived in seven different cities, and had just spent ten months riding a motorcycle all over Latin America for an art project (appropriately called "In Search of the Frightening and Beautiful"). I was in a city I felt I no longer knew, once again without many friends.*

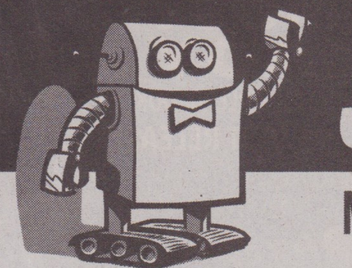
*One day I saw a listing for a free show at the Houston Public Library. It was a Mydolls show. "Holy shit," I thought. "I finally get to see them play!"*

*Those four best friends owned the stage so completely and with such pleasure that all the good parts of Houston came flooding back that afternoon.*

*After their set, Trish walked right up to me and asked, "Who are you? Don't I know you?" Then Dianna came over and gave me an enormous hug. Neither of them had in fact ever seen me before.*

*Who am I? I'll probably be trying to figure that one out till I'm dead. But at least now, thanks in great part to this band, I have a solid clue as to where I belong.*

*mydollsmusic.com*



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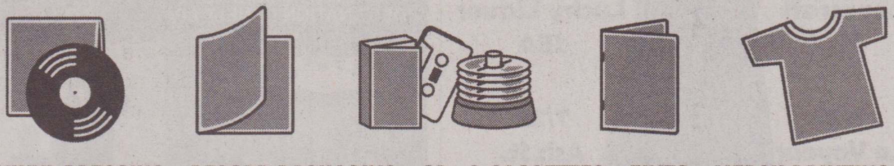

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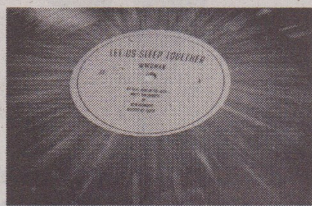

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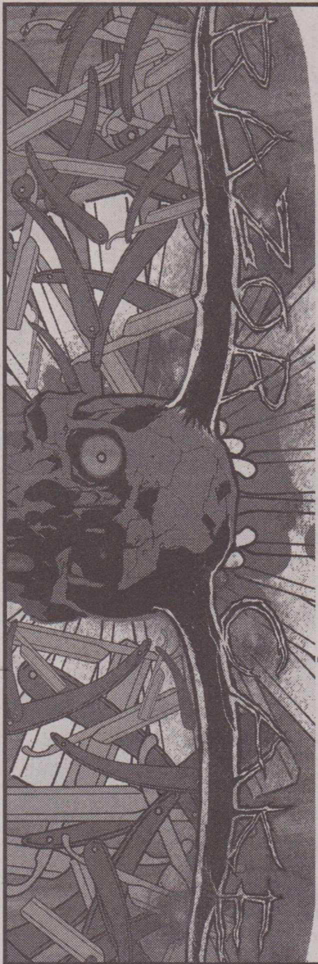

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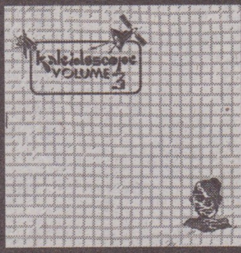

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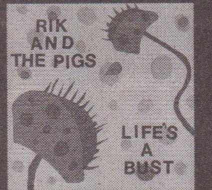


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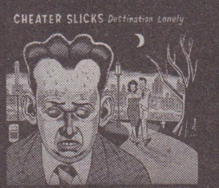


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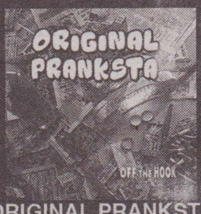


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### RADIOS OF THE WORLD ARE TUNING IN TONIGHT, ARE YOU ON THE DIAL, ARE YOU TUNED IN RIGHT?

My childhood dream was to be a radio DJ. Technically I realized that dream. I have been on radio since 1986. The only problem is it never became my main job. I have stuck with community radio instead of moving to commercial radio because I never wanted to be told what to play. That was the dream, to earn a living playing records I liked. Unfortunately, I was born too late. By the time I was ready to start my career radio was dictated by limited playlists and the DJ as a personality and musical educator was being phased out.

Not surprisingly I am still nostalgic for the good old days of radio. **I Am What I Play** is the story of four radio DJs who were on the airwaves during radio's heyday the 1960s to 1980s: David Marsden, a Canadian who decided as a child from the backseat of his parents' car that he wanted to be on the radio. Pat O'Day, who focused on Seattle bands in the 1960s and is credited for bringing the Northwest Sound to nationwide prominence. Charles Laquidara, whom I listened to in my youth, accidentally got into radio in Los Angeles when his movie career failed, but went on to be a hugely popular and influential Boston DJ. Meg Griffin was a New York DJ who championed the burgeoning punk scene.

All four have great stories about getting into radio, dealing with management and giving the audience what they want and need. There were controversies, drugs, sexism. Laquidara caught flak for exclaiming on air, "Hey, there must be a god, Reagan's got cancer." He also quit his show to do cocaine. Griffin almost made the move to the brand new MTV until she overhead the guy in charge break down the VJs according to stereotype, her included. She stayed with radio where her talent was appreciated.

DJs like Laquidara and Griffin are the reason why I listened to radio in the '70s. First and foremost it was the music they played. It was always something new to me. I wanted to hear more and became addicted to it. Record buying is a bit more difficult when you are a kid with no money so luckily I had the radio.

I would like to believe that seeing **I Am What I Play** would inspire people who weren't around when radio was like this (and especially people who were) to demand more diverse and interesting programming from their local broadcasters. Of course, the corporations who run commercial radio stations these days don't give a shit about the people listening, but that is another story. At the very least I hope people will be inspired to seek out and support the remaining independent radio stations. There are always new sounds to be heard. Listen to them. (distractioninc.com, streaming on vimeo.com)

One of the best things about the modern streaming age is all the small niche stations you can get. I recently subscribed to Fandor because someone mentioned a great film called **Private Property** that was streaming on there. I am always looking for great films I haven't seen so I signed up.

**Private Property** is a film from 1960. It starts out as a noir with two guys Duke and Boots coming up the hill from a beach to a gas station. They have an air of possibly having just escaped prison or having committed a crime. They harass the gas station attendant, demanding free soda in return for not causing any problems. They hitch a ride with an unsuspecting salesman and force him to follow a woman in a convertible. The story then moves into a psychological thriller with the two men befriending the woman Ann with the end goal of getting her into bed. (fandor.com)

One of the saddest films I have seen recently is **Lot 63, Grave C** a ten-minute film from 2006. **Lot 63, Grave C** is the story of Meredith Hunter, the man who was killed by a Hells Angel at the Altamont Speedway Free Festival in 1969. The circumstances justifying his death are he was high, had a gun, and tried to jump on stage. The Hells Angels were out of control that night. The one who killed Hunter wasn't convicted even though anyone can watch it happen.

**Lot 63, Grave C** tells what happened after that infamous night from the vantage point of Hunter's unmarked grave in Vallejo, CA. Hunter was pretty much forgotten. The newspaper mentioned his name once. The Rolling Stones or any of the other bands playing at Altamont did not go to his funeral. His grave remains untended. The whole situation demands that some small thing be done to commemorate Hunter's life. (fandor.com)

It is probably a known fact that I will watch almost anything punk related for the benefit of this column. However I don't like to be bugged into watching something. The publicist for **The Stolen Lyric** really bugged us here at *MRR*. It is always a red flag for me when the package is addressed to the wrong person. I have been writing this column for decades so obviously there is no familiarity with *MRR* when a film is sent in addressed to someone who does not write the film column.

Annoyances aside I watched the film because it sounded weird enough that it might at least be interesting. **The Stolen Lyric** is an animated film about a band called the Merry. They are fronted by Robin Hood. I hope you get that. Instead of dialogue **The Stolen Lyric** uses lyrics from popular songs. There are some punk songs, but it mostly classic rock songs and some hip-hop. It starts with Guns N Roses's "Welcome To The Jungle."

I agree with the themes of **The Stolen Lyric**. Income inequality has grown too much. Media consolidation hurts creativity. Of course, it's fun to steal from stupid, rich people. Unfortunately, the novelty of **The Stolen Lyric** quickly dissipates. The lyrical story line is too forced. The use of so many well-known songs and different genres makes it hard to focus. I applaud the attempt. It is an interesting experiment. It just needs more fine-tuning.

**The Stolen Lyric** is available to watch on-line free of charge on YouTube so the filmmakers live up to their film's subject. Watch it for yourself and let me know what you think. (facebook.com/TheStolenLyric)

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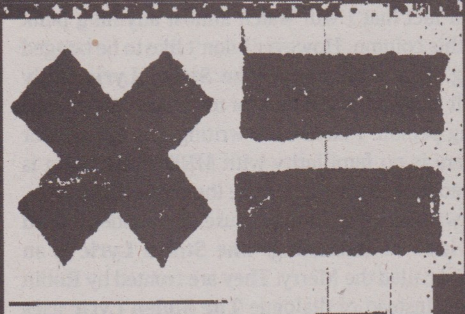

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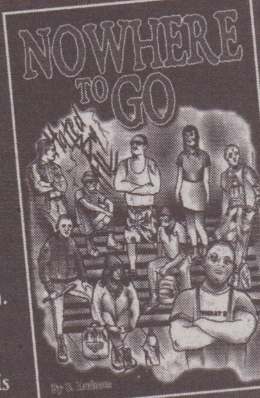


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***Antifascism, Sports, Sobriety:***
***Forging a Militant Working Class Culture***
**by Julius Deutsch, Translated by Gabriel Kuhn**
**PM Press, 2017**
**128 pgs | $14.95**

The title of this book is funny to me in the way that it reminds me of those old infomercials you'd see on TV for CD sets where the song titles are also the lyrics of the songs. That straightforwardness is what I appreciate about this book, which is one part a history of politicizing the proletariat in parts of Europe and one part selected writings by Julius Deutsch, who was a main figure in that history.

The book, which is a convenient and easy read, feels relevant to me not only because of a renewed conversation and spotlight on antifascism but also because of its focus on the "working class" as a powerful political body. The struggle for the support of the working class between the Left and the Right has been constant and ongoing, however in our present state that struggle feels hyper-intensified, with both sides asserting assumptions that the working class rightly belongs to them. This book does a good job of helping the reader understand the Left's relationship with the working class, which at times feels like a courtship that fails as greatly as it succeeds. The efforts described in the book regarding The Austromarxist's attempts to establish a culture of sobriety to supplement a politicized proletariat is a good example of that, and gives insight into modern day courtship from the Left. The overall theme I took away from reading this was that when trying to organize a group of people into your movement it is important to be conscious of being pandering or dogmatic. Luckily these are obstacles that both the Left and the Right must hurdle, however with the spectrum of "normalcy" swinging more and more conservatively it becomes more of a challenge for the Left to appeal to an audience that is made to see them as "extremists."

We see the same tug of war with the working class now, and it's interesting to consider why it feels like the Right does such a good job of appealing to a body of people who have historically been more left-leaning, as most working poor have been. The Austrian workers movement of the 1930s had many successes in reaching the working class of the time through organizing through sport and self-defense. The Worker's Olympics (1925–1937) are a clear evidence of the that, where people came together to compete *with* each other, not *against* each other. The Worker's Olympics at its height drew 25,000 workers and united them against the same enemy, "capitalism, which has created nationalism and continues to foster it." The failings of the Austrian workers movement of the 1930s seem to have been internal and external. Internally there were disagreements regarding the militancy of the movement and how that could potentially mirror the fascists. Externally, some ideas of the Austromarxist were seen as "far removed from real life aspects of working class culture." Again, familiar and relevant things to be considered in modern organizing.

As someone who has come to shy away from reading theory or intellectual writings I appreciated the way this book was put together, in that it gives an overview of events while providing important names, dates etc. that readers can further research, without being too analytical. Which seems intentional when you read "to reference the context of a bygone era as an explanation for outdated ideas is as legitimate as it is meaningless for a contemporary context."

—Oliver Yan

***Against Doom: A Climate Insurgency Manual***
**by Jeremy Brecher**
**PM Press, 2017**
**$12.95 | 128 pgs**

Jeremy Brecher is an author, documentary filmmaker, and activist perhaps most widely recognized for his book *Strike!*, which details the history of North American labor movements. He is also the co-founder of the Labor Network for Sustainability (LNS), and has been actively writing about and engaging in the greater climate protection movement since the late 1980s. In *Against Doom*, Brecher breaks from the mold of many recent works concerning global climate change and mass extinctions in the Anthropocene. (Often associated with the idea of *the sixth extinction*, the Anthropocene is a proposed geologic epoch characterized by a period in which global ecological systems, climate patterns, and even core geology have been fundamentally altered directly as a result of human activity). Instead, he illustrates a number of tangible and accessible ways that people can become involved in what he calls the *climate insurgency* in effectively combating global climate change as well as the fossil fuel industry and the countless powerful governmental and corporate entities that seek to profit from continuous unhindered exploitation of the earth's unsustainable natural resources.

Published in late February of 2017, the book speaks from the political reality we are currently enmeshed in. Beyond the scope of our own morbid elections here in the states, we are observing what appears to be a surge in far-right and neo-fascist figures gaining frightening traction along a more mainstream political field. This bears countless burdens upon a nearly immeasurable range within the anthropic realm, but what might it mean in regard to cooperative and responsible governmental action in response to the increasingly perilous indicators of global climate change? Brecher directly frames this issue as such:

> "With the world's historically greatest greenhouse gas (GHG) polluter now ruled by climate change deniers, coal and oil executives, and fossil fuel promoters, we cannot count on governments to protect our climate. Now climate protection is up to the people. The only way to combat devastating climate change may be climate insurgency".

Brecher defines climate insurgency as a "strategy for using the power of the people to realize our common interest in protecting the climate. It uses mass global, nonviolent action to challenge the legitimacy of the public officials in the U.S. and elsewhere who are perpetrating climate destruction." Through examples such as the 2016 actions of the Break

Free Movement (to date, occurring simultaneously over six continents, the largest global civil disobedience against fossil fuels), sit-ins and direct action against the Keystone XL pipeline, and Break Free Albany halting the routing of potentially explosive crude oil bomb trains through low income communities of color, he outlines the efficacy of intersectional and organized strategies in combating obstacles that can often seem beyond one's individual or collective scope.

One major obstacle in gaining traction for movements geared toward combatting vectors and proponents of climate change between radical communities and the general public is a particular brand of despondency, one Brecher describes as the "invisible wall of silence," one that forms an initial barrier to organizing and acting to protect the climate. One can easily speculate on the myriad reasons for this, from the sheer weight and arbitrary nature of a vastly complex issue to the fact that it can seem difficult to prioritize such a ubiquitous yet impalpable issue in the presence of an onslaught of regular issues that need to be addressed just in one's own community. Nonetheless, Brecher attributes this to what he calls "democracy deficits," a virtual labyrinth of bombardment and misinformation funded and delivered via the fossil fuel establishment and associated governmental entities.

A major aim of *Against Doom* is to help break down these constraints that keep people from engaging in the climate insurgency, to provide material relief to the existential and corporeal concerns that manifest as an oppressive wave of "climate despair." Brecher discusses the *Public Trust Doctrine* at length, as a tool to not only be utilized as a means of legal defense when faced with charges after engaging in direct action, but as a fundamental tool in battling the actions of those with the most reprehensible contribution to climate change. The Public Trust Doctrine is a common law doctrine that is nonetheless written into the U.S. Constitution, and as such can hold lofty ground concerning issues centered around natural resources and the protection thereof. Put simply, "in American law, it means that the government has a duty to protect shared natural resources and to hold them in trust for the public and for future generations". Brecher expounds on this idea, and how it can be put to use:

> "The public trust frame can "flip the script" in civil disobedience and nonviolent direct action, making it clear that the fossil fuel industry and the governments that do its bidding are criminals, while the climate insurgency is upholding the Constitution and the public trust".

Stated on its own, the notion of invoking the Public Trust Doctrine as the foundation of one's defense seems idealistic and ill-prepared. However, Brecher cites a number of instances where it has done just that, and as such has potential to be a major boon in actions directly combatting the actions of entities such as the fossil fuel industry. He cites the recent (November of 2016) victory of the group Climate Kids in essentially suing the government over directly contributing to climate change, the motion being upheld by Judge Ann Aiken via the basic tenets of the Public Trust Doctrine. Outside of the U.S., the 2007 case of the Kingsnorth Six who shut down the Kingsnorth Powerstation, a major coal and oil plant in Kent, England was also discussed. Brecher explains, "The protesters admitted they had tried to shut down the plant, but argued that they were legally justified in doing so because they were trying to prevent climate change from causing far greater damage to property around the world." Through the same course of defense, they emerged victorious, setting a very hopeful precedent.

The deep and lasting roots that Brecher holds within labor and worker's rights movements lend a refreshing and compelling voice to the dialogue surrounding how to grasp and wield efficacious results in combatting those most responsible for global climate change. One of the major issues he addresses is the divide between environmentalism and workers' rights campaigns. In particular, the ways that major corporations, big oil, governmental agencies and others of the ilk have manipulated rhetoric in such a way that has made unions side with polluters under the false notion that jobs will be lost in the name of environmental protection. Clearly this is far from a new tactic, as virtually any region containing some degree of "mineral wealth" can attest to, but it is also one that continues to resonate among those constantly marginalized and sidelined in the tireless quest of powerful corporate bases to exploit and extract against all calls of reason and ethics. In a similar manner, Brecher details the ways that the same entities attempt to compel the *general public* that environmental and climate protection is detrimental to their interest and well-being. As he states, "the dynamics of capitalism make climate protection policies appear a threat to prosperity," and it is this degree of rhetorical manipulation that invariably manifests as one of the core obstacles to combating those most responsible for climate degradation, by deceiving the public to believe in this long tried-and-failed linear narrative of personal gain via exploitation. Brecher challenges these notions with examples that can be used in effectively flipping this narrative, challenging the legality of such on a constitutional level (by way of the Public Trust Doctrine), and providing alternative models that address not only the ways in which communities would benefit financially through the development of sustainable technologies and infrastructure, but the ways in which entire systems must be restructured to address inherent fissures, without which no true tangible progress can be made:

> "Climate policy needs to include strong racial, gender, age, and locational hiring requirements to counter our current employment inequality and provide a jobs pipeline for those individuals and groups who have been denied equal access to good jobs. It needs to help remedy the concentration of pollution in low-income communities; their lack of transportation, education, health, and other facilities; and other manifestations of discrimination, inequality, and racism".

The timeliness of this book is both urgent and vital. As I'm writing this, the abysmally acknowledged 100th day of the harrowing reality of a fucking Donald Trump presidency, thousands are descending on Washington DC as part of the People's Climate March, a call for resisting the myriad rollbacks on climate protection efforts and policy aggressively pursued by our current administration. Just yesterday the EPA removed a major section of its webpage that was devoted to understanding the science of climate change. It should be an alarming cue to the greater public that in the United States, the single greatest contributor of GHG's and climate degradation, not a single question regarding climate policy was asked during any of the three 2016 presidential debates. *Against Doom* offers palpable solutions in personally and collectively combatting a force that can appear both abstract and insurmountable, yet all-pervasive in its facility to affect all tiers of biological life. It provides a set of simple, yet fundamentally sound tools that can be utilized in cases both within one's own community as well as on a national and global scale. This is an excellent resource for those aiming to contribute in meaningful ways but perhaps feeling unsure of the most direct and effective avenues to become involved in. Beyond being a strategy document, Brecher also effectively heralds the need for people to become active and involved in the greater climate insurgency, as the alternative may be a situation from which there is truly no return. Indeed, as Brecher closes the book with the simple yet sobering statement: "All we have to do to realize this doomsday scenario is nothing."

—Morgan Stickrod

# RECORDS

For review and radio play consideration, send two copies of vinyl or one copy of CD-only releases to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146, USA. We will review everything that falls within our area of coverage: punk, garage, hardcore, etc.—no major labels or labels exclusively distributed by major-owned distros. Releases without vocals or drums will not be considered. Please include contact information and let us know where your band is from! No reviews of test pressings or promo CDs without final artwork. All records reviewed are added to our archive, the largest collection of punk records in the world.

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**ACEPHALIX – "Deathless Master" LP**

So great to hear this vicious and heavy crust metal album on vinyl! This is a re-release of their 2012 cassette and CD on clear splattered green or black colored LP. It sounds gruesome and crust as fuck. San Francisco's ACEPHALIX really need no introduction—this is certainly one of the darkest, most depressive harbingers of war metal from the US. Members still play as ACEPHALIX from time to time, and have gone on to play in VASTUM, LAWLESS, NECROT, and previously DEPRESSOR. You really can't find a better crust punk pedigree all on one album. This holds up and digs a deep grave. (JR)
(Agipunk)

**ALEMENT – "The Hunter" EP**

First of all, stenchcore is the shit! I pretty much like any stenchcore band even when they're terrible (and many of them are). That being said, this band is way beyond the fucking pack. This shit sounds like AMEBIX meets POSSESED, but if AMEBIX were actually good at their instruments. Dang, these fuckers shred! If you've ever even thought about rocking a dreadlock mullet, then you need to get this now! (BA)
(Ryvvolte)

**ANTIDON'TS / MDC – split EP**

It's 2017, we have a fascist dictator in the White House, society is regressing back to conservative values of the 1950s, and racist cops are killing people at random. It's time for another motherfucking MDC record! *"Pleeease nooooo,"* you say but listen up anyway. The ANTIDON'TS kick this off in a catchy, poppy way with "Make America Think Again." It reminds me of M.I.A. or ADOLESCENTS. "A Cold Day In Heck" follows with a slight rockabilly beat, and still sticking to OC punk worship. Not horrible, but not so memorable either. MILLIONS OF DELUSIONAL CITIZENS, as they're known here, blast off with the no brainer remake "No Trump No KKK No Fascist USA." Not sure if X-Con Ron Posner is present here, but the guitar ain't half bad. Following is the long-time live favorite, a cover of "Big River," which is just swell. Not much of a stretch musically here but still better than the biting political record that I and maybe you aren't putting out right now when we really need it. (RO)
(Swamp Cabbage)

**ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE – "The Cage" CD**

*We Are…The League* 2017!? If you're like me you've spent many mid-afternoons drunkenly (and not) shouting along to this band's early works. Or maybe you're one to pooh-pooh their sexist, cartoonishly offensive lyrics and you'd be absolutely right doing so (but arguably much less fun). So will this get you to "jack off until you bleed"? Probably not, but maybe it's not as horrible as you'd think. Animal is the only OG here, and his voice has held up amazingly well. The guitar is solid on the punker tunes, but the drums are god-awful. They retain their English country charm on songs like "Fields Of Yesterday" and their pirate sea shanty past glory on "A Bad Storm," but it's still pretty weak songwriting overall. There's an obligatory ode to everyone's favorite UK punk Charlie Harper with "Uncle Charlie" and they keep their English cringe-worthy Shakespearian punk theatrics alive with "13 Rat Theory." Is there a "For You" or "Streets of London" to speak of here? Not really, but maybe worth a listen for an old-time fan curious about how long you can pull off a chains-and-leather-pants wardrobe 20,000+ pints of piss after the fact. Ugh...I have to say it...So what? (RO)
(Cleopatra)

**ANTI-SYSTEM – "At What Price is Freedom?" CD**

Yes, this is the same ANTI-SYSTEM from the 1980s with a new EP. Only five songs here with two of them being new recordings of old tracks from their *No Laughing Matter* LP ("Don't Worry" and "Wot No Meat?"). Surely, there is concern when an old band gets back together to record new material (ZERO BOYS…*oooof!!*) but I think ANTI-SYSTEM manages to hold it down, still maintaining an edge of fury and real aggression, even through the seven-and-a-half minute long title track. The guitars show a spark of metal that I maybe didn't notice before but the band keeps it fast, with their feet firmly planted in the hardcore camp (with some peace-punk overtones). Singer Phil Dean sounds just as pissed as ever. Pretty killer overall, but I wish bands would never re-record their old stuff. Keep moving forward. (GH)
(Boss Tuneage)

**APOGEE SOUND CLUB – "Antiderivative" LP**

APOGEE SOUND CLUB is a band you've seen since seemingly forever ago at about every show you've ever been to in the Bay Area, so it might be hard for our local readers to listen to them with fresh

ears. I highly advise them to, though, because this record is kinda badass. Quirky, jangly aggro guitars sounding like a drunken pissed MINUTEMEN. Sometimes I forget that Wade has some serious pop sensibilities hidden underneath all those layers of sheer maniac, as a few of these songs sound like *Por Vida*'s lost cuts, and a couple could straight up be ripped from his own weirdo pop from way back, 50 MILLION. OK OK, I'm overselling this. Lemme back up. There are a few flat spots, like some rambling murmurings over way too long instrumentals, some general art-punkiness that I didn't go for, and I don't know why some songs date back to 2014 (and like five different studios, so the quality varies a little for almost every track), but this record is pretty fucking tight. Each cover is personally hand fandangled. (DZ)
(Bad Matt)

**THE ARSON PROJECT – "Disgust" LP**
Holy shit, this crusty grind LP is a brutal cold slap in the face. Ferociously tight in technical execution while retaining its mängel punk roots. Think D.E.R., HAAPOJA, SAYYADINA…various bands that have the guts of hardcore punk and the fight of insane organic grindcore. A very engaging LP from Sweden. Short and bitter, and highly recommended. (JR)
(Power It Up)

***ASK – "Discipline & Pressure" LP**
The debut LP from Indianapolis' *ASK which features the ZERO BOYS' Paul Mahern. The music sounds like a leftover from the '80s college rock scene before punk went mainstream, when former punk rockers went against type in their post-hardcore material. Bob Mould and Grant Hart come to mind. It's the curse of learning how to play and expressing your anger in a different way or whatever the myriad of reasons. The music gets slicker, poppier, and more heartfelt. *ASK's songs are catchy and there are some odd elements thrown in that keep it interesting. I like it. (CK)
(Ground Sound)

**ATTENTAT – "Ge Fan I Mej" EP**
Reissue of the first ATTENTAT single from 1979 with a live version of a song from their second EP tacked on at the end. Killer, classic first wave Swedish punk that belongs in every collection. The back of the sleeve has a great photo showcasing some innovative Swedish teen punk fashion. Get this. (SW)
(Re-Ken)

**BAD BREEDING – "Divide LP"**
The noise layered on top of this entire record reminds me of PERE UBU, with a vocal delivery like trying to find a job and failing. Lyrics that are angry, and well thought out, like RUDIMENTARY PENI. This record is a lot of things, and one thing. It's frustratingly amazing in its presentation, and never really goes anywhere you'd expect. If you're fed up with predictable music and want something equal parts meditative and aurally exasperating, *Divide* might be your favorite record of the year. This shit sets me on edge, which is a feeling everyone should have right now. Like all Iron Lung releases, the packaging is on point and the art perfectly reflects the musical output. Amazing. (MW)
(Iron Lung)

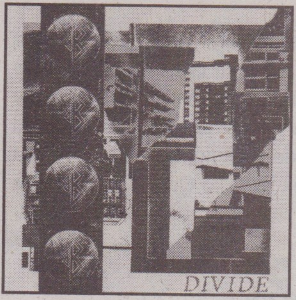
**BAD SAM – "Bring Me the Head of…" LP**
This is fast punk rock—some parts '80s SoCal hardcore (a bit SUICIDAL, a bit Nardcore), and others '90s Epitaph Records. Musically it's pretty straightforward: power chords with some octave playing, a little rock guitar soloing, and some moshy parts. The vocals are a mix of yelling and singing with just a little tremolo (giving it that real '80s feel) and some backup "*Whoo-oohs!*" Songs about Trump and Monsanto might end up dating this record, but who knows, maybe Trump will be punk's next Reagan. (PA)
(Kriminal Good)

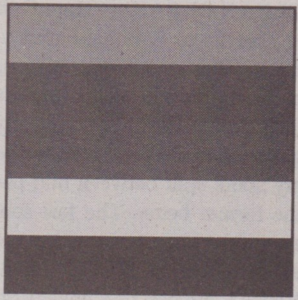
**BAD SLEEP – "Subtracting" EP**
Some sweet tunes on here! Not a sugary pop overload, mind you, but sweet definitely aptly describes this fairly gritty pop punk trio. Not quite drunk or sloppy, but not exactly polished, either. It's catchy as fuck. It's on repeat. What more do you people want from me? (DZ)
(Get Better / Rumbletowne)

**BARRIO TIGER – "Ave Maria" LP**
This band is like a cliché of what you would think an LA bar rocking band in the '90s would sound like—HELLACOPTERS and NEW YORK DOLLS worship wrapped up in mudflap girl-laden cowboy shirts and leather chaps. There are "Ramalama" nods to the MC5, and lyrics like "*If I was a hooker you'd be broke*" in the standard sexist rock'n'roll style. This kind of slop falls completely flat if the band is not living the life for real and you can't fake it, especially if your singer has no grit and dirt in his voice. It just comes across as dads or work bros looking to blow off steam. This just falls into the heap of half priced creepers at Retail Slut. (RO)
(Ghost Highway Recordings)

**BEATNIKS – "Beatnik Theme" EP**
Primitive beats, distorted guitars, and panicked vocals. These aren't the cool cat daddy-o BEATNIKS of the last century. This poetry moves to a more furious tempo. These BEATNIKS are from Oakland, CA and feature members of the WORLD, LIFE STINKS and VIOLENT CHANGE. Listen up, man. (CK)
(Neck Chop)

**BEHAVIOR – "Bitter Bitter" LP**
The cover art is amazing, like a bleak Ellsworth Kelly. I don't know how to contextualize this record. I listened to the first one in an attempt to do so, but it didn't help—someone's high school emo band covering LUNGFISH but it sounds like TOAD THE WET SPROCKET or LIVE. Listening to this is like that but with added "getting stuck in a coffee shop on open mic night and the self important poet bro traps you in the corner and recites his Nietzsche Bukowski visions in your





face and you just want to go home and read some Clarice Lispector" vibes. Dudes should have to have a license before starting bands. A true hellscape. (LG)
(Iron Lung)

**BETA BOYS – "Oh Wow! Hard Rock Music!! I Love It!!" EP**
It's cool that this band can change up their sound a bit with each record (and even within a given record!) but the same, um, freak vibe runs though it all. First up is some buzz saw hardcore blasting with some ring modulation on the guitar. "High On Drugs" starts out with a declaration that "*it's time to* rock!" and fittingly sounds like a stoned afternoon with uptight, sporadic babbling / screaming over a loose dirge. Finally, "Return of Snake Man" slows it down further, primarily composed of shimmering riffing verses with a lethargic chugging verse. Then it's time to flip it back over. (DG)
(Digital Regress)

**BITE – "Tracks Past & Present" CD**
Local band actually going by "BITE starring Chelsea Rose" on this release. This is old school female-fronted US punk. This reminds me of VKTMS and the '90s NY band the GOOPS. Based on the listed recording info, I'm guessing the ten studio tracks were selected from prior releases. This disc ends with four well-produced live tracks. This band makes the rounds around here playing with some well-known headliners. This is decent punk that rocks without getting metal-y. (RL)
(Die Laughing)

**BRAIN FEVER – LP**
Weekend adult vacation band: *activate!* The "members of" list is kinda mandatory here: SCROTUM GRINDER, IN/HUMANITY, GUYANA PUNCHLINE, END OF THE CENTURY PARTY…you get the idea. These boys meet in Florida every so often, hang hard, and make a record. *Brain Fever* is the first installment and expectations are exceeded. Angular and forceful hardcore backed by a surprisingly appropriate Hammond organ and fronted by Chris Bickel's inimitable self. It's desperate sounding music that reminds you that hardcore punk can (and should?) exist without rules and boundaries. The aforementioned bands are all appropriate reference points, but BRAIN FEVER is definitely the matured and refined product, the thing that happens when you finally grow up and figure your shit out. I am for enjoyment. (WN)
(Tsuguri / Yage)

**BUZZ RODEO – "Combine" CD**
This Stuttgart trio really threw together an intolerable mess of all the worst parts of SHELLAC and JESUS LIZARD. The failed effects range in sound from "Whoa, is my stylus really that dusty?" to "I can't believe this brand new CD is skipping like horseshit, already!" and I don't mean that in a good way, either. Nary a hook to be found. It drove me up the wall, also not in a good way. (DZ)
(Antena Krzyku)

**LOS CAIDOS – "Tumbas" flexi**
While many bands' songs twiddle on and go nowhere for several minutes or more, LOS CAIDOS pack compact but complete hardcore songs with intricate structures into thirty seconds or less. Two vocalists (the more prominent one a screecher), a nice punchy guitar, plenty of blastbeats from the drummer, and everything played super tight. If you miss the 625 glory days, definitely get on this. (DG)
(Andy Birds / Chica Psicotica / HC Times / Ideas Venenosas / Percha / Rambo)

**CHEETAH CHROME MOTHEFUCKERS – "The Furious Era: 1979-1987" 2xCD**
Best of the classic Italian hardcore bands? We could all argue all day but I think I'd always come back to CHEETAH CHROME MOTHERFUCKERS. These discs collect all of their studio recordings as well as some *Furious Party* outtakes and one live track. The *400 Fascists 7"* is one of punk's most disruptive and upsetting aural assaults; like an animal in captivity, screaming and beating on its cage. *Furious Party* is an unsettling nightmare of a hardcore record, unmatched by any other. The *Permanent Scar* tracks are unique stabs of hardcore fury, and *Into the Void* sees them scraping up what's left of their initial hardcore stylings and successfully adding new tricks and theatrics. Syd Migx's voice is actual bloody gravel, totally inimitable, and certain parts of the screams simultaneously give me goosebumps and make me want to rip my own face off. Participation in the international DIY punk network and heavy touring in Europe and the USA earned them widespread recognition in the '80s, and while most of their records aren't too hard to track down, it's hard to believe that it took this long for an official discography. This double disc comes housed in a cardboard slip-cover and has a thick booklet full of things to read and gawk at. Vinyl is obviously superior to CDs, but apparently the vinyl edition has fewer tracks. Punks: this is essential shit. If you don't have it you *need* to get it. (MA)
(Area Pirata)

**CHESTER – "Chest of Bester" CD**
Twenty-eight throw-back CHESTER re-releases from '97 to '00. Sounds like BLATZ. A hell of a lot like BLATZ. Weird, ironic, late '90s DIY punk from the UK. (CR)
(Back From The Dead)

**C.H.E.W. – "Neuroleptics" EP**
So I guess 2017 is the year of excellent demos released as EPs? Not complaining. C.H.E.W. was on my Top Ten list last year for good reason: these songs rule! The singer's voice is a serrated blade slicing through lyrics like "*horny as a fuck boy / sick of all my sex toys*," and the guitar is equally brutal. The record artwork features sick drawings of tiny yellow teeth, a perfect fit for a band that bites you hard and doesn't let go until the end. Take-no-prisoners feminist hardcore at its best (AB).
(Neck Chop)

**CLEAN BREAK – "Hate Culture" EP**

This Faro, Portugal-based youth crew band has a great raw and thick guitar sound, decent earnest vocals to match, and a big boom-y recording that brings to mind the non-Revelation NYHC they likely draw from. The riffs are mostly good and reasonably original for the genre, the songs are well-written for the most part, and the six songs are about split between mid-paced and fast, though they definitely do the former better. The fast songs would be a lot more captivating if they were just a few notches speedier. I was in Faro a number of years ago, and saw an "FSHC" tag at the train station, so hopefully CLEAN BREAK are part of a lineage of hardcore bands holding it down in this beautiful coastal town. (DG)
(Refuse / Salad Days / Straight & Alert)

**COKE BUST / DESPISE YOU – split EP**

This one is a must-have for all you speed freaks out there. COKE BUST lays down some fast and loose hardcore that brings VOID to mind right off the bat, if VOID knew about blastbeats. They've also got some pretty thoughtful lyrics about economic disparity that impressed me. I mean, with a name like COKE BUST I thought they were going to be…you know, stupid. DESPISE YOU drops some extra heavy, '90s style, West Coast powerviolence. They take cues from all the classics, from CROSSED OUT to CAPITALIST CASUALTIES. It's like an overview of the entire Slap-a-Ham catalog on one side of a seven inch. The female / male dual vocals and doomed-out intro and outros bring these guys to the top of the heap. Powerviolence forever! (BA)
(To Live a Lie)

**COLD SWEAT – "Blinded" LP**

I was indoctrinated into the cult of COLD SWEAT by a friend from the Northwest, whose enthusiasm was such that he followed them on tour down the West Coast. I ordered both of their records on his recommendation in 2007, when you could still find them cheap. Since then, *Blinded* has been my go-to wall puncher and the soundtrack to many endless miserable afternoons. Borrowing from hardcore's best tempo-shifters (BLACK FLAG, SIEGE, and CROSSED OUT come to mind), COLD SWEAT paired a muscular musical approach with the most furious, hateful vocals imaginable. Like banging your head against the wall until it bleeds. Just the sickest, most progressive heavy music ever made. "*All I have is hate / I'm blinded by my rage…*" (SW)
(Iron Lung)

**CONJURER / KAIJU DAISENSO – split flexi EP**

CONJURER from Indianapolis play morose and pummeling doom metal, a kaleidoscopic gallop of transformative modern sludge with monstrous vocals. The track "You're in Here With Me" is both a catchy and hostile appetizer. KAIJU DAISENSO serve up the main course with "Carnivorous," a longer than usual bludgeoning powerviolence grind attack. There are some elements of old school thrash metal mixed fluidly with debauched hardcore. A bizarre and limited little flexi with cool art to boot. (JR)
(Tokyo Fist)

**CUT – "Second Skin" CD**

Snappy indie / punk. You like it the same way you liked that first FRANZ FERDINAND record but didn't tell your crust friends. Tracks like "Take It Back To The Start" are minimal retro psych / rock, but the whole thing is way too slick to appeal to garage purists, and the band spends more time meandering than they do rocking, if you know what I mean. For real though, the chorus / hook to "The One Who Waits" is really sick. (WN)
(Anti Pop)

**CUTTING THROUGH – "Demo 2017" EP**

Four songs of brutal Portland straightedge hardcore, complete with metal breakdowns, triumphant gang vocals, and non-stop lyrics about identity that often blur the line between inspirational and preachy. A fair amount of focus is given to the "choices" and "path" the singer has taken in the past. And yes, he is confident they were correct. Every day is full of reminders that the world is shit. Sometimes we need a little motivational hardcore. The kind that quotes Buddha and tells you to live for today. The kind that makes you wanna circle pit, and get your life together. Music by straightedge kids, for straightedge kids, about being a straightedge kid. (FS)
(CKUD / Refuse)

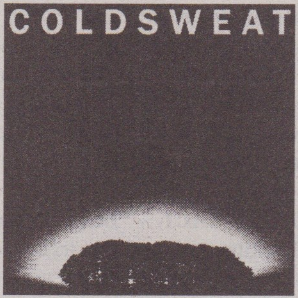
**DAGGER MOON – "Citadel" LP**

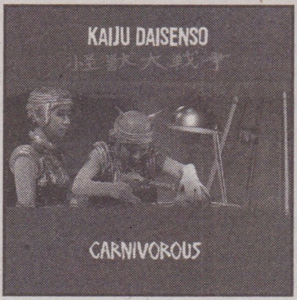
Synth-heavy doom. When I say "synth-heavy," what I really mean is "synth dominated," but these kids are smart to let the keys take the lead. A painfully monotonous pace almost throughout, DAGGER MOON make the doom sound more mysterious than dark, a vibe that is accentuated by haunting shouted vocals and a recording that does a brilliant job of focusing on the interesting parts of the band. My first thought when I dropped the needle was the VSS meets bleak / black metal…and I still kinda stand by that. Better on the second listen than the first…now I'm going in for number three. (WN)
(Otherworldly Apocalypse)

**DAUÐYFLIN – "Ofbeldi" LP**

Following in the footsteps of last year's best-of-the-year quality *Drepa Drepa* EP, the premier Icelandic hardcore punks return with this beast of a 12" that features a huge sound and a slightly more focused attack. The pounding, relentless drive of these songs recalls NO STATIK, while the hypnotic quality of the riffing has an UNA BÈSTIA INCONTROLABLE feel, though DAUÐYFLIN are more grounded in straightforward punk than either of those bands. The vicious vocals remain a definite highlight, and while few reading this will understand the Icelandic lyrics, the anger and passion with which they are delivered will resonate with anyone. With their diverse songwriting skills, DAUÐYFLIN are equally adept at pulling off a sludgy BORN AGAINST-style crawler ("Nidstöng") as they are at grinding out a frantic DISORDER-esque 1-2 noise ripper ("Ofbeldi"). Unlikely as it may seem given their isolated home base, DAUÐYFLIN are one of the bands to watch in 2017 if you're interested in the cutting-edge of hardcore. I can't think of many other bands that have managed to

RECORDS





grow as much creatively in such a short period while still retaining an essential sound identity. (AU)
(Iron Lung)

**DEATHWISH – "Unleash Hell" LP**
Massive D-beat rock'n'roll from a crew of Wisconsin veterans. On their second full-length, DEATHWISH are bigger and heavier, and the snarls are more pronounced—think GENOCIDE SS or (later) WOLFBRIGADE with shameless metal hooks and guitars up front, à la *No Speed Limit For Destruction*-era INEPSY. The vocals are barked like '90s US anarcho / crust gone sleaze metal (that's a serious compliment, and these fools manage to pull off both extremes effortlessly), and sit on top of the entire mix. Cap the whole thing with Marald art and you've got yourself a solid banger. Fists in the air, punks. (WN)
(Beer City)

**THE DESTRUCTORS – "Pow! That's Killermusik: Volume 3 (Reflection)" CD**
OK, so I don't know much about the DESTRUCTORS other than the fact that they were / are a UK band from the '80s who broke up, reformed, broke up again (maybe), then reformed and have been utterly and insanely prolific. This here CD holds 11 split singles that they put out from 2010–2015 alone, so I guess being an aging punk is no excuse for laziness. How does it sound? Fine. It sounds like the VIBRATORS and '80s UK punk with a bit of pop edge. I can't really turn up my nose to it. If you care about the DESTRUCTORS, go for it. (CR)
(Rowdy Farrago)

**DIFFICULT CHILDREN / YR PARENTS – split CD**
YR PARENTS starts this off with a spastic, hectic, multi-tempo, and unnecessary genre smashing mess topped with semi operatic vocals. They have their memorable moments, to be honest, but their funky metal carnie pop train passed me up LAMF. DIFFICULT CHILDREN threw me off with a killer opener that sounded like some early DINOSAUR JR four track worship. There's a slight, and pretty cool, indy vibe throughout their set, but I got lost on the mathy, heavily 'verbed and overly dudely noodles. Not my thing. (DZ)
(self-released)

**THE DIRTY NIL – "Minimum R&B" LP**
Perhaps the least "Fat" sounding band to release a record on the label. That's partially because this is a collection of the 7"s the DIRTY NIL put out before jumping on the infamous roster. Influences appear to derive from a weird cocktail of GUIDED BY VOICES, REPLACEMENTS, HOT SNAKES, and mid-period AGAINST ME! Sometimes it's hard to tell if you're listening to punk or sped up '70s rock. They might even borrow a riff from ALICE IN CHAINS. It's all super catchy with lots of hooks. More gritty than you'd expect from a Warped Tour band. It's good stuff. If you're a fan of AEROSMITH, the STROKES, and DRIVE LIKE JEHU, you should check this out. (FS)
(Fat Wreck)

**D.O.G. – "Declaration of Genocide EP"**
An EP full of songs that remind me of that moment after you pull an all-nighter, deliriously gnashing your teeth, hatefully anticipating the chirp of birds warning you of the fast approaching sunrise, and the sense that you've let everyone down. It's that mix of accomplishment and fear. This is a very anxious record, along the lines of LIP CREAM's *Kill Ugly Pop*. I'm really in to this record. I'd expect nothing less than amazing from the group of Pittsburgh punks involved in this band. (MW)
(Even Worse)

**DURIAN / METH LEPPARD – split EP**
Top notch old school fukkn grindcore split, '90s hail! METH LEPPARD is a guitar/drums blast frenzy with barked low end vocals, and they end their side with a primitive REPULSION cover. DURIAN sound like filthy after a night of sizzurp—murky, low-end dual vocal shits, kinda messy but ultimately worth the effort required to get through the haze and dig the meat. Their side wraps with an ASSÜCK cover. No polish, no pretense...just grind. Thank you. (WN)
(Agromosh / Brain Hemorrhage / Jerk Fil-A)

**EASTFIELD – "Another Boring Eastfield Album: A Rail Punk Collection" CD**
A "greatest hits" retrospective from these Brit punkers' (formed in 1996) first three LPs and EPs (now all currently out of print). Thirty-three tracks of pretty basic (though entirely pleasant) snotty sing-along punk à la the RAMONES or early SCREECHING WEASEL. It all sort of starts to sound a bit same-y after a bit, but this will appeal to folks that think *It's Alive* is one of the finest records to date. (RK)
(Violated)

**EASY MONEY – LP**
A demo collection from one of Canada's early new wave / power pop bands, including the two singles the band released. It's mid-tempo and catchy and has a certain gloominess at times, definitely more power pop than new wave. Did I mention that it's catchy? It's true, super catchy. (KK)
(Hosehead Reissues / Neon Taste)

**86 GEMINI – "My Love" EP**
Fast Midwestern hardcore punk. Lots of those creepy crawly slam beats and gratuitously mysterious vocals. The band shines on the slow(er) bits, with a DEAD KENNEDYS vibe that I can't quite identify (that's why it's a *vibe*, and not a sound) creeping through the otherwise obvious S.H.I.T.-esque stomp. "My Shame" is worth the entire record, leaning more towards mature and trippy dark punk (CROSS STITCHED EYES, PINS OF LIGHT)…it's a good move. This band shredded the one time I saw them, and an EP that makes me think and takes several listens to fully digest? That's a good ass EP. Worth noting: collage art sleeve and the killer massive newsprint insert are also badass. (WN)
(High Fashion Industries)

**EROTIC DEVICES – "All We Wanna Do Is Rock'n'Roll" LP**

I have to admit that I didn't have high hopes for this one. Based on the cover art, it seemed like maybe they're a bunch of old guys. (I get how rich that is coming from me.) But one of the hamsters watching the old guys play says, "Who farted?" So are they old dudes or really immature dudes? Or maybe they're both. With song titles like "I Really Wanna Fuck," I had a feeling I was going to lose my patience quickly. Needle on the record, though, and I had to admit that it's pretty goddamn catchy. Imagine if SLOPPY SECONDS were from Germany and played a lot more poppy. It's mid-tempo and catchy and pretty good. It's definitely pop punk. (KK)
(Wanda)

**EXIT ORDER – "Seed of Hysteria" LP**

Ten cuts at 45 RPM from this "members of" Boston band. The guitar tone stands out first: commanding, razor-sharp and chorus-heavy, but playing blurry-handed hardcore riffs. The rhythm section is tight and thick and the vocals are quick and sharp. As usual, I like the faster songs best, but they utilize some breakdowns and have a couple "Raise the Curtain"-type offerings to keep it from being all-go-no-slow. Take the hardcore-ness and vocal style of SACRILEGE and mix it with elements of late '80s / early '90s UK punk bands SOFA HEAD and DAN and send it all through a modern hardcore filter and it would probably sound close to EXIT ORDER. (MA)
(Side Two)

**EXOTICA – "Musique Exotique #01" EP**

I am really happy to see that this demo has been committed to vinyl. A truly international band based in NYC that gives the world a taste of what 1-2-UK82 might sound like with a more inventive guitar tone and significantly more complex songwriting. The palpable disgust in the vocals with lyrics in Spanish and English feed straight to the amygdala and make me want to smash a plate or a state. I am very impressed by the creative approach taken toward all the sounds and elements contained in this recording. Get this. (JK)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)

**5000 – "Monadh" CDEP**

Modern metallic Scottish anarcho-punk. Presentation is pure '80s anarcho, but it's as if the attitude and message are being reinterpreted by modern doom / metal neophytes, which makes for an intriguing combination, and the result (though brief) is excellent. Two songs and two interludes. All four just make me want more. (WN)
(Our Future)

**FUTURE VIRGINS – "Dirty Smiles 7" Anthology" LP**

Honestly, I could've reviewed this record without throwing the thing on, but I did it anyway because it's flawless. This LP collects this Chattanooga band's 7" output between 2006 and 2009 along with their two tracks from the 2010 *Do Ya Hear We* compilation (I own all of these and they have been played to death). They follow in the long line of their region's love of jangly, melodic punk tempered by an understanding of essential power pop and how to drink steadily for twelve-plus hours and still play a great set. If the bands SEXY, HIDDEN SPOTS, ADD/C, GIANT BAGS OF WEED, and BASEMENT BENDERS mean anything to you, you're already tracking this one down. It's good to have all of these songs in one place. (GH)
(Let's Pretend)

**FUZZ ATTACK – "Bitch (Ain't No Snitch) EP**

Fucking garbage! I'm trying to be nice but this kind of half-assed surf / garage whack off shit gets to me. I guess they live in town so I'll take the beatdown rather than having to suffer though another record by these geniuses. The title track is a painful sexist homage to "bad girls." Kill me. Side two is "Zombie Girl" (?!!!). What-fucking-ever. Can you really not do anything better than that? Do you just have a ton of disposable income to blow on putting out records with half ass recycled CRAMPS themes? Only good thing I can say is that it seems they like CRIME, but they also like the DEAD KENNEDYS, so go die. (RO)
(Dub El Duce)

**GANDH-X – "Spatio-Tempotaton" CD**

Japanese hardcore and punk here. A mix of up-tempo RANCID, thrash, and PROPAGHANDI. Vocals are in English, and the bassist plays an upright bass. They used to wear wrestling masks but not so much anymore. These guys date back to the mid 2000s. Oh well. (RL)
(Amazing Madness)

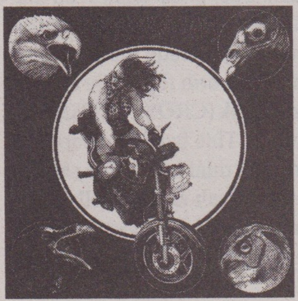
**GARY WRONG GROUP – 2xLP**

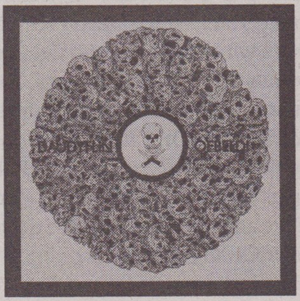
Any self-respecting connoisseur of malevolent music should have already been diligently collecting the GARY WRONG GROUP releases that have sputtered out over the past four or five years. For all those who are sadly unfamiliar, it's something like STICK MEN WITH RAY GUNS meets CHROME, just as fried as its immediate predecessor WIZZARD SLEEVE but a hair groovier, the kind of twisted, creeping rock'n'roll that perhaps only the Gulf Coast can produce. If you're a new acolyte (or if you want to draaaag the bad vibes ride out without having to peel yourself off the couch to flip the record), 12XU has compiled and re-sequenced most of the available GARY WRONG GROUP material on this 2xLP, alongside three unreleased cuts. Mobile, AL's finest export and the last bastion of true Southern Negativity, a group that can make even a song about ice cream sound totally miserable. *"You're fucking up my fucking world."* (GA)
(12XU)

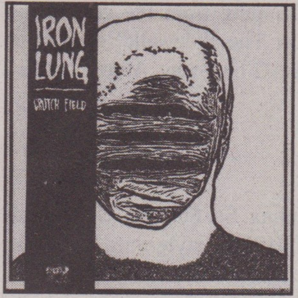
**HÄSSIG – "Adie Merci" LP**

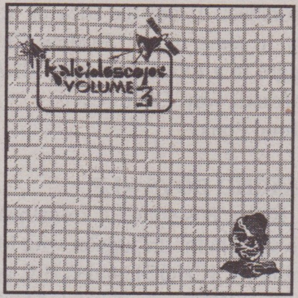
Holy shit y'all, let's get in the Delorean and dial in the time travel device for the late '90s / early '00s. Looking and sounding like a Skuld / Profane Existence joint from 1999, HÄSSIG offer up eleven tracks of super-charming rock'n'crust complete with a super-thick booklet and spot-on politics. The weak recording is a definite turn-off, with the drum sound in particular coming off just terribly (that snare sound... woof, shit sounds like the "disco" setting on a Casio keyboard), but the energy and enthusiasm, especially in the vocals are a huge redeeming









factor. All in all, it's a decent debut in a style that's slightly fallen out of favor and thus has room for growth, but these guys have got to record at a different studio next time. This recording is not acceptable. (AU)
(Blackout Brigade / Rinderherz / Svoboda / Tanker / THC+DIY)

**HEATSEEKER – "On the Ropes" EP**

Polish hardcore from Warsaw with gruff vocals and dive bomb guitar parts. This has the pace and urgency of great hardcore, but the riffs are a little generic for my taste. Lots of group vocal parts and breakdowns. My favorite song is "Prediction," which pummels the listener and hooks you in with the harmonics, change-ups, and rad breakdown. No song longer than two minutes! (JC)
(Refuse)

**HOLY RIVALS – CD**

The debut album for HOLY RIVALS, a trio from Pittsburgh, PA. If you love grunge, sludge, and noise, you're in for a treat. These guys definitely know what they're doing when it comes to this kind of music and they're good musicians. Some of the riffs, like on the song "Sleep," are sludgy as fuck. Me personally? I fucking hate it. To me this music all sounds like KORN and NIRVANA. (DB)
(self-released)

**ID – "Drzewa Umierają Stojąc" LP**

Another piece of the Polish hardcore punk puzzle given the reissue treatment by Warsaw Pact. Cited as one of the first hardcore bands from Krakow, ID drew influences from early NYHC bands introduced to them by American students that came to the university for a Polish language program (this is evident from the KRAUT and CAUSE FOR ALARM shirts they're wearing in some photos). While I can hear those influences a bit, I can't ignore the obvious early Polish hardcore influence coming through on the faster songs, namely MOSKWA. This is a deluxe reissue of their first studio tape from 1991, originally illegitimately released by the notorious bootleg label Fala. Dig the lovingly-arranged booklet full of photos, zine excerpts, and band interview and lyrics (in Polish and English). (MA)
(Warsaw Pact)

**INFESTO / KAMI ADA – split LP**

This split joins politically minded bands from Colombia (INFESTO) and Indonesia (KAMI ADA) on a record that offers an excellent introduction to both groups, all housed in a lovingly screen-printed sleeve with a truly excellent screened poster included. INFESTO is a super high-energy straightforward hardcore band that combines aggressive tempos and vocals to the clean sound and straightforward approach of early Spanish and Latin American punk. While not quite reaching the same rarefied height, one could imagine that they'd definitely fit in alongside the lineup of the *Grito Suburbano* comp in terms of style and attitude. KAMI ADA is a more modern and metallic bunch, with a bit of an early AFI melodic vibe colliding with a straightforward USHC attack, bolstered by some great gang vocals. Personally I find the INFESTO side more compelling but there are plenty of punx who would prefer the more melodic aggression of KAMI ADA. The important thing is that this is a solid release from two bands that most readers of this magazine are unfamiliar with that are well worth your time. (AU)
(Byllepest Distro / Discos Bastardos / Emancypunx / Illegal / Insureccion Nomada / Liberacion / Mierdallo / No Ego Discos / Rudio Total / Sin Tremores / Up the Punx)

**IRON LUNG – "Crutch Field" EP**

Two-song lathe of IRON LUNG's signature freak-violence. IRON LUNG is sick, and these songs ain't bad by any means. They're filled with all the noise addled MAN IS THE BASTARD inspired crushing that you crave. The hard to play format, however, makes this one unessential in my book. Record nerds will probably love it though. Limited to 125 and only available at shows. (BA)
(Iron Lung)

**KALEIDOSCOPE –"Volume 3" LP**

The first time I heard the SEX PISTOLS LP I remember feeling really disappointed. I thought it was going to revolutionize my existence but it was just another rock'n'roll record. I was thirteen and didn't get the context of their sound. It made me think of '50s jukebox cliches rather than the musical insanity I imagined from their reputation. I ended up loving them of course, but that feeling has stuck with me; when something just sounds like rock music it's hard to shake…Not that every band can be TEDDY AND THE FRAT GIRLS but I guess when something has a rockist impulse I would rather a "Sister Ray" or REMO VOOR incomprehensibility to shake salt on the veneer. Every time I have encountered KALEIDOSCOPE it has seemed like a totally different experience. The first tapes had a lo-fi intensity that made their rock impulses not only palatable but something I sought out. I sorta lost track of them in the deluge of reality that is modern punk, but after seeing them play in a dank Oakland basement a summer or so ago they had a heaviness that negated the experimental feeling I got from the tapes and made me feel like I was at a battle of the bands circa 1975 which is not why I got into punk. Cock rock is ever present in the punk sphere, especially the *MRR* review bins, from bar rock drool through to the post TY / FUZZ BLUE CHEER / FLOWER TRAVELLIN BAND re-enactments that have taken over. I would rather listen to fifty shitty ELECTRIC EELS bootlegs in a row than some dude's "rock" band that somehow is DIY enough to get reviewed in this mag. I have a different feeling about r'n'r than Tim Yo, I like it destroyed and collapsing. Whenever Krautrock is thrown around in reference to a group, people usually just mean rock with a capital R with a bit of keyboard feedback, not the nuance of "Hero" by NEU or whatever. That longwinded diatribe is context as to why this is getting a neutral review, even though it in no way sounds like my show going *rock* experience of this band. It's definitely more of the first category of KALEIDOSCOPE, furtive basement experimentation using some rock techniques, a record that strangely really reminds me of EX-CULT, with that same sort of thuggish swagger that former / errant HC youth give their bands. This has minimal garage trails of course, veering towards HC more. It's loose and swaggering and fans of the modern NYC punk

age have probably already bought and hungrily consumed these sounds, but there is something missing here that I can't quite put my finger on that is preventing me from resetting my view of KALEIDOSCOPE for the third time. If you have slogged your way this far through this tiresome review you should probably do yourself a favor and listen to the record as it might work for you. For my own personal version of "psychedelic hardcore" however I will stick with DAVE E AND THE COOL MARRIAGE COUNSELORS. (LG)
(Feel It)

**KONTATTO – "Fino Alla Fine" LP**
Guess what, motherfucker? KONTATTO are still here and they're still dishing out top-notch crust! They're not too cool for the style, they're not playing big fests only, and they're not going goth, they're grinding away in the melodi-crust trenches, offering up catchy leads, DISRUPT-style blasting parts, and pummeling riffs for fuckin' days. While there are lots of callbacks here, from the SACRILEGE high-end guitar squeals to the DISCHARGE-via-Sweden-influenced D-beats, everything is wrapped up in the triumphant major-key approach that has always characterized the KONTATTO style. The throat-y vocals are pure fucking punk, the songs are short and punchy and nothing feels over-indulgent. This is a band that is laser-focused on the punk side of the metallic crust equation, no matter how many metallic flourishes they happen to throw in to the mix. Check out the almost mellow vibe of the title track and how well it contrasts to the more aggressive passages that come both before and later on the record. It's a note-perfect march. Marziona deserves special praise as one of the very best crust drummers in the world today, with the technical chops to throw down blasts when necessary and the wisdom to hold back and keep things grounded where many other drummers would see an opportunity to over-play. Seriously, this record is a master class for drummers who play in crust bands, especially those who come from a metal background and want to squeeze a fill or blast into every space possible. While the graphic design might be too heavy on the WRETCHED references, the extensive song descriptions and lyrics that are offered in both Italian and English are very welcome and overall the record looks great and sounds amazing. (AU)
(Agipunk)

**LEISURE WORLD – "Paper-Thin Community" EP**
Hardcore akin to Ginn's melted design of what it could become and AmRep's pink eye-clouded vision of how to tear it apart. Guitar pierces the ozone, high in the mix while cavernous vocals creep up from the depths. All the while there is a sure-as-shit tight rhythm section hammering away like there's a bee in the bonnet. The "melody-line" on the thick, plodding title track feels real bad...in a real good way. (JK)
(Deranged)

**LIFE STINKS – "Hanging From The Ceiling / Shadow Chilling On The Sidewalk"**
Two great songs from this San Francisco band. "Hanging From The Ceiling" is a laid-back groover with a pounding Neanderthal drumbeat. I like the idea of actually hanging from the ceiling. I'll try it some time. "Shadow Chilling On The Sidewalk" goes more aggro in a ROLLINS at his BLACK FLAG best way. Angry, but in a sarcastic way. Cool. (CK)
(Total Punk)

**MACHO BOYS – LP**
Killer '80s-style HC from these PDX punx. So. Fucking. Good. They go straight for the jugular with MINOR THREAT style chug, but better, think IN SCHOOL and C.H.E.W.—that's a swift kick in the dick to all trifling HC bros out there. Macho Boys consist of members of LOW CULTURE and PISS TEST, with Tekiah at the helm. Songs are clearly political and pro-femme (see: "Victim to Blame," "Papa Don't Preach," "Stop the Hate," "We Don't Owe You Anything") but I've also gotta mention their shoutout to Stone Cold Steve Austin for all you wrestling nerds—they know you are out there, and you are loved. (CR)
(Neck Chop)

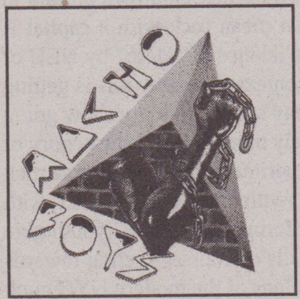
**MANATEEES – "Darkness / I'm A Nightmare"**
The guitar riffs on this 7" remind me of my second band. It's giving me flashbacks and weird memories. But as I listen repeatedly the riffs evolve into more of a PUBLIC IMAGE LTD guitar sound. These songs may be making my ears go wacky. "Darkness" features buzzy guitar and a frantic pace. The vocals are forced out and his voice gets hoarse as he is singing them. "I'm A Nightmare" is a twisted love song about opposites attracting. *"I live in the underground, baby / You think that's wack."* This is MANATEEES at their best. (CK)
(Ken Rock)

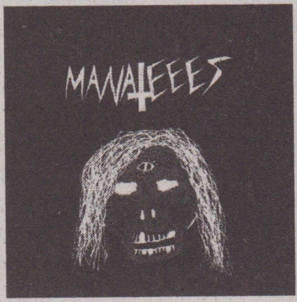
**MARBLED EYE – "EPII" EP**
Tense Bay Area art school propulsion, for fans of the first two ULTRAVOX LPs and listening to CRISIS 45s 'til you lose your mind. Vocals have an early GUN OUTFIT quality that is probably not intentional. Maybe they are aiming for TOTAL CONTROL, but you know, who isn't…It's worth checking out everything Melters Records puts out, and this has three killers and one filler on it, which is a good law of average for a first 45! (LG)
(Digital Regress / Melters)

**MAULER / STINGER – split EP**
Two bands of punks that love raw metal and noise. MAULER lay down some heavy duty metallic hardcore hammering. They feature driving riffs, groovy and well-timed leads, and a noisy as fuck guitar tone. Pretty sick! STINGER does some wicked D-beat that draws more from VENOM than any "dis" band. Demonic vocals and squealing guitar trickery win me over every time. Metal punks, this one's for you! (BA)
(Serenity Now)

**ME FIRST AND THE GIMME GIMMES – "Rake It In: The Greatestest Hits" LP**
I'm not sure I've ever really understood the allure of this band. I certainly can't say I ever thought I needed to see a greatest hits album by







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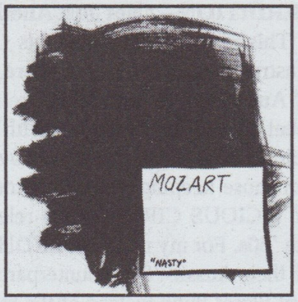


them. They are a cover band. They cover mostly songs that weren't really very good to start and they give them a sort of up-tempo pop punk spin. They're all very well done. They know how to play their instruments and sing. I'm just not sure what the point is. I mean, I guess it's funny, for like a hot minute. This record is not going to change anybody's life. (KK)
(Fat Wreck)

**MOMMY LONG LEGS – "Rock Product" EP**

"It's kinda surfy garagy punk, I guess," claims the nice handwritten note with this EP. Yeah, it is. Attitude filled feminist punks from Seattle who rock it out. Catchy, sassy, fun songs. There are four on this debut EP. One is a CRAMPS cover. Cool. (CK)
(Youth Riot)

**MORDECAI – "What is Art" EP**

Truly great! First song is a bashed out mixtape must-have that fans of music will clutch to their very beings…Rest of this now classic 45 follows suit with Montana dissonant reality strike on MIKE REP bands, COUNTRY TEASERS, certain eras of the EMBARRASSMENT, VU shambled guitars, direct vocalizations…this is another milestone for your collection. How much art can you take? Only this kind. (LG)
(Sophomore Lounge)

**MOZART – "Nasty" EP**

Upending their impressive demo, 'ZART's *Nasty* collects six hardcore punk songs performed with the base tenets of immediate inspiration and total energy as the focus. More to the point, there's simply no pose or adherence to genre tropes here, at least none beyond commitment to absolute urgency and abandon, which is what we're all in this for, after all. There's just so much to cling to in their delivery: rhythms that explode, riffs that smash, exceedingly petulant and tortured vocals, all perfect. So when you hear rag-tag crushers like "Love Knows No Bounds" or "The Monkey," total collapse seems inevitable, yet the band somehow steers clear, leaving freaks in puddle and wondering how they came through it all. No rules, but this rules. Prior transmissions from personnel hint at the concept of "total freedom" being the drive for their operations. With *Nasty*, they've reached that and then some. Punk without a net, wild and unruly. (MC)
(Iron Lung)

**LAS MUNJITAS DEL FUZZ – "Es el 69" EP**

Straight ahead snot rocket garage from Spain. I like the chipmunk group back-ups on the first song, enhanced by the classique BILLY CHILDISH guitar basics. There a few too many solo licks that edge it from '60s garage stomper to blues hammer but luckily they only subject the listener to such things for microseconds. Decent basic garage retogressivity for cave humans worldwide (LG)
(Slovenly)

**NAG – "False Anxiety / imsosmall"**

This is just kind of okay. It sounds like a lot of stuff this label has been putting out lately with the robotic SPITS like vocals over spazzy, quirky guitar. Side one especially sounds much like LE SHOK in that way. "Imsosmall" is a little more interesting, with a slow droney tempo and KILLING JOKE-style fast parts. Not a bad record at all, but I can't say because I've already forgotten it. (RO)
(Total Punk)

**NATURE BOYS – "3rd LP" LP**

Fuuuuck yeah!! NATURE BOYS new LP is a vinyl release of their cassette release from last year plus four newer songs and it is so, so good!! Their raw recordings showcase a love of DEAD MOON and the WIPERS without sounding like total rip-off posers. They sing songs of isolation, space, dogs, and living free in a world that wants you to pay for every little thing. Every song feels like an instant classic. Real recognizes real. NATURE BOYS are one of the best bands in the US. Get this or suffer alone. (GH)
(Mandible)

**NEARLY DEAD – "Weathered Meat" LP**

Truly wretched cover art, a pile of porn and fake "escaped mental patient" accouterments, which along with their goofy band logo makes this looks like a bad thrash record from 1986. Instead you get some Canadian manrock with a DAVID YOW fanboy feeling, EASTER MONKEYS saxophones over SCRATCH ACID sleaze. Definite macho man "no girls allowed club" BRAINBOMBS wet dream feeling from the song titles and band aesthetic. Why would you listen to a faux SCRATCH ACID when you can just listen to the actual thing and not get the phony aftertaste? I don't get tribute bands. Man feelings for Men. (LG)
(Geriatric)

**NED GARTHE EXPLOSION – "Flashlight Tan" LP**

I guess technically the music of NED GARTHE EXPLOSION would be considered garage rock moderne. It is not primitive or trashy. The influence of TY SEGALL is present, but NED GARTHE EXPLOSION keeps things reined in. There are some grooves, but mostly the music is slick and occasionally goes too metal. They call this their second concept album, but I am not sure what the concept is, which pretty much means it misses the point. (CK)
(Sad Pad)

**NERVE GRIND – "Years of Shit" EP**

There is zero fucking around on this one. It's like, 1…2…3… *bbllaaahhh*! all the way through, and that's the way I like it. Do I even need to mention grindcore, or do you already know? It sounds like *Evolution Through Revolution*-era BRUTAL TRUTH and the cover features some kind of decaying beast / man simultaneously shitting and vomiting its innards out. Fucking sick! (BA)
(Agromosh / Ill Faith)

**NO FAITH – "Forced Subservience" LP**

I confess that I find supergroups somewhat yawn inducing. *"A few people who have already proven that they are really good at doing a*

thing *combining forces to do a different version of* that same thing?" Yeah....snooze. I also know what I like, and sometimes brilliance cannot be denied. This second full platter from NO FAITH is soul crushing, bleak, and mesmerizing powerviolence, and the inclusion of (sometimes harsh) power electronics both inside and in between tracks makes the sound an ever-present and integral part of the whole instead of some bullshit afterthought. The ingredients are all here (blasts are fast, slows make your whole body tense up, and the vocals grate in the best possible way), but the sum of the parts is so much greater than a description might imply. It's like someone took your favorite things from an era and a genre and kinda made them better than you thought they could be. You know, like a supergroup or something. If you like GASP, IRON LUNG, DYSTOPIA, BLOODY MINDED, CROSSED OUT…you get the idea. This one is pure cream. (WN)
(Iron Lung)

**NOTHING OF MERIT – "Use of Ease" 12"**

Despite the band name, this is pretty good. They play noisy garage punk with a bit of a hardcore edge. It's not really that simple, though. At times it almost sounds like some NATION OF ULYSSES demos (and not because of the saxophone but more the messy rock'n'roll with snotty, partially screamed vocals). At other times it sounds like some Amphetamine Reptile art punk. There is even a song that just sounds like they took a SABBATH riff and put some sax over it. Cool noise punk that manages to not sound dated or boring. (PA)
(Reason for Resistance)

**OOZE – "From Abyss Higher Than Sky" CD**

Ten songs and forty minutes of pissed off punk and hardcore in Japanese. I like the songwriting and though it's not the most original stuff it's still good for the soul, even if you don't understand a word. Some of the songs switch off from fast punk to breaking hardcore, even incorporating guitar solos, some ska guitars, anthemic singalongs, and what sounds like a clarinet intro on one of the songs. All over the place! Pretty cool shit but some of the songs stretch out and get too repetitive, before switching it up and capturing you again. (DB)
(Hardcore Kitchen)

**PADOT NA VIZANTIJA – "Pocetak I Kraj" LP+CD**

After what feels like a slowdown of steady '80s Yugoslavian reissues from NE! Records over the past year, fans are treated to a new collection of tracks from this obscure Skopje band, which translates to "The Fall of the Byzantine Empire." Dark post-punk with a strong beat, heavily influenced by BAUHAUS and JOY DIVISION, but still unmistakably Balkan. Two high-quality studio tracks kick the LP off, followed by eight pretty good sounding live tracks. The dense LP-sized booklet should almost be worth the price alone for collectors / enthusiasts of the era and region. Tons of large photos and clippings and a band history in Macedonian and English. (MA)
(NE!)

**PERDITION – "Not Just Another Anthology" 2xLP**

This is Volume Two in this German(?!) punk label's "History of Australian '80s Punk / Hardcore." Yes, you read it correctly, local fans of Australian '80s hardcore are so thin on the ground that a German label is picking up the slack with this deluxe archival treatment: double colored wax with full color cover and big thick history book insert. For those keeping score, Volume One featured extended discography of VICIOUS CIRCLE, who released a split LP with PERDITION in the '80s. For my money, PERDITION def takes the cake. Unlike many of their Aussie '80s counterparts, PERDITION took their cues from Brit Street Punk instead of the more typical hardcore thrash of the era. With real unique melodic (almost goth!) vocal stylings, this is anthemic street punk that wouldn't be out of place on Riot City. Real classy shit that is inexplicably good enough that I don't need to get up and take the needle off every other track, just let this spiky punk shit roll. (GB)
(Power It Up)

**PLEASURE SQUAD – "Strækmarch" EP**

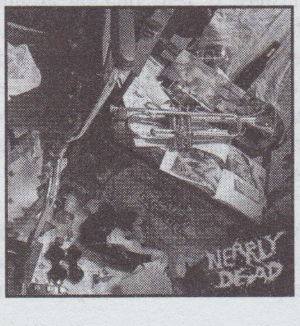
PLEASURE SQUAD is four old friends from the '80s squat scene in Copenhagen, Denmark. This four-song EP collects seven minutes of angry punk rock that could have believably been recorded any time over the last 30 years. It's street punk evergreen. The best part of the experience is trying to pick a winner in the competition of dual guitars and dual vocals fighting so hard to take over the competing duo, especially in the title track. (RH)
(Femfingreioprøv)

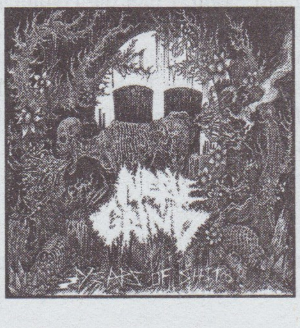
**PMS 84 – "Easy Way Out" LP**

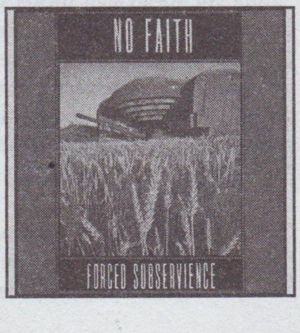
Eight new tracks from Portland's punk as fuck PMS 84. As with their EP, these songs are stripped down with gruff and blurted vocals. There's a definite UK82 influence going on here—think the PARTISANS or contemporaries SAVAGEHEADS—but with more brutal and hardcore vocals. I believe their singer is originally from Boston and sang for KOWARD, which comes across in the vocal delivery. Great bass tone. Favorite tracks are the mid-tempo scorchers "Easy Way Out" and "Guillotine." (JC)
(Discos Enfermos)

**PRESSING ON – "Future" EP**

I once described this band as a sum of members' past projects but delivered with the unfiltered exuberance and determination of a bunch of small town adolescents desperately struggling to find a path and a purpose. I can excuse some people for viewing PRESSING ON as a little less "complex" than previous projects…but shit, things aren't really that complicated: shit is fucked up, it sucks, and finding that path and purpose is tough. White knuckle, full throttle North American hardcore punk rock. Personal. Intense. Powerful. And yeah…pretty simple. But so damn good. Will's lyrics are straightforward and combine that youthful enthusiasm with perspective (*"remembering the times we had, it's been a wild ride / but I can't help wondering if it was all just wasted time / instead of building for the future, we just pissed it all away…"*) and the songs are strictly to the point with no frills. Thank you. (WN)
(Deranged)





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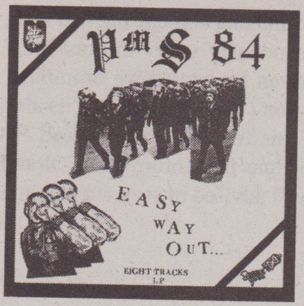
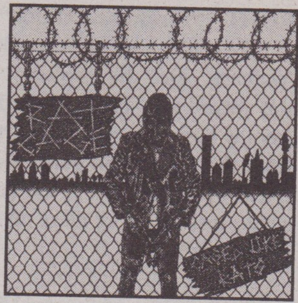




**P.R.O.B.L.E.M.S. – "Enemy/Spy / Every Day" EP**
This is a new release by Portland's finest and hardest working hardcore punk band. *Enemy/Spy* is pure fucking mania and raw anger. I'm sure the members of P.R.O.B.L.E.M.S. hear this all the time, but this is in the same line as POISON IDEA. One powerful song on each side with the end result of the listener begging for more P.R.O.B.L.E.M.S. This band is badass and this release is no exception. Can't wait to hear what else they have in store for us in the future. (DB)
(Just4Fun)

**PURA MANÍA – "Cerebros Punk" LP**
We have all figured out the problem with contemporary "goth punk" by now, right? It's not punk. There's no teeth. You get a flanger on the bass and some reverb on the guitar and you think you're fukkn 45 GRAVE, but it doesn't work like that. Maybe you think you're EL AVIADOR DRO, but without the roots and the politics—and if that's all you bring to the table—then I would rather just listen to DEATH CULT, ya dig? But these punks…these punks have the reverb, they got the weird effect on the bass that makes it sound all warbled, they have the single note almost awkward guitar leads—*AND THEY ARE FUKKN PUNK*. PURA MANÍA play fast, they are catchy, they make you want to dance and they make you want to fight, and the second the vocals start on "La Peste" there can be no doubt that they are coming from the right *(read: wrong)* side of the tracks. The kind of maximum energy bouncy punk that makes you dance your ass off and smash shit. Old school purists will rejoice, and young whipper-snappers raised on the raging Southern California / Mexican scenes of the late '00s will kick a solid kick in the ass. And you…you, punk? What's going to happen when you listen to "De Una Banda Cualquiera" for the first time? You're going to dance until your ass falls off. Then the title track closes the record and you're going to fall in love. This is the PELIGRO SOCIAL record for the next five years. (WN)
(CV / Hysteria)

**RATA NEGRA – "Oído Absoluto" LP**
This one hit me hard from (seemingly) out of nowhere. Madrid's RATA NEGRA play immediately catchy, dark punk in the vein of SoCal heavy hitters (ADOLESCENTS, early *Posh Boy)* along with hints of VULPESS and modern wonders the STOPS. Every song is hit after hit on this record...each one seems to top the one before it. No small feat for a full LP. Insanely good production helps to make this a vibrant, explosive and crucial debut LP. Members of LA URSS and JUANITA Y LOS FEOS. (GH)
(Beat Generation / La Vida Es Un Mus)

**RAT CAGE – "Caged Like Rats" EP**
Very TOTALITÄR-inspired hardcore from one guy presumably living in the UK. Raw, busy-riffed D-beat with a snarled and strained vocal attack. Also like TOTALITÄR, each song gets a synopsis on the lyric sheet. Topics deal with vote-shaming, society's expectations of gender expression, work, immigration detainment camps, our asshole president, and war. I only need so much of this style in my life, but the record gets two thumbs up from me thanks to excellent tunes and meaningful and genuine lyrical content. There's only one TOTALITÄR (and only one Poffen), but shit's still smokin'. (MA)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)

**RED KATE / STIFF MIDDLE FINGERS – split EP**
Two Kansas punk bands do a pretty good job here. I think you could safely say RED KATE slips'n'slides between some sort of sloppy, unrefined SNFU type situation and a wild breed of Southern drawl Am/Rep records. These are compliments. STIFF MIDDLE FINGERS kinda turned me off with a sort of an adult take on a folk punk vibe, but after repeated listens, this is sounding more like a herky-jerky country party punk vibe. All in all, this is fairly solid, and I plan to listen to it several more times this week. (DZ)
(Black Site)

**RIÑA – "Dejen Vivir a lxs Marginadxs" EP**
Back in March, I was working my way up front to watch RIÑA on a rooftop in Mexico City and I found myself standing next to an eager eyed Rafael. He grabbed my arm and said excitedly, "RIÑA are the greatest punk band in all of the world, I'm happy that you get to see them." Twenty minutes later...I would not have dreamed of arguing with him, and the six bursts on their debut EP only solidify the sentiment. Pure and severe Mexican fucking *punk*—fast, loose and ultra intense. Rooted in the wildest '80s sounds, RIÑA terrorize convention with breakneck speed, brief spats of disjointed anarcho-punk, desperate and demanding vocals, and a presentation that keeps you on edge throughout the recording. Little things that you can't really map out without sounding contrived (like the mid-heavy guitar that drops in after bass intro in "Cansada," and the way that song speeds up just to fall apart at the end…) are so honest and raw on this record, it makes the band seem even more real. I look forward to seeing them in California this summer, though I know that nothing can compare to that rooftop in DF, under the stars, across the street from a police station, going wild... but between now and then I will listen to this record one hundred times. Mandatory. Pure fire. (WN)
(Cintas Pepe)

**RIXE – "Baptême Du Feu" EP**
Suck the shit out of my ass if this band doesn't get better and better with every release. RIXE translates to a fight, a brawl, a ruck! Damn if these garçons don't come out swinging with full piss and venom on "Tenter Le Diable." That's about the Devil, and that's about as far as my crappy French goes here. "Paris-Est" is just crushing with heaviness, a word that doesn't usually mix with Oi!, but the buzzsaw guitar combined with the overwhelmingly catchy football chants is infectious. Sorta like a heavy metal R.A.S, if you can imagine that jack. Side two rips into a slashing guitar riff and unbelievably pounding drums on "Condamne." We are finally battered to a crying bleeding pulp on the mid-tempo rager "Hecatombe" as we crawl out the pub door begging and pleading for the next record. (RO)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)

**ROHT – "Strákarnir Okkar" EP**

Like a trip to the punk rock dentist. Hopefully you enjoy buzzing, feedback, and the incessant sound of power electronics. If not, this record may not be for you. However, if you are a fan of noisy, stompy bass-driven hardcore, you'll want to check this out. Five songs from these Icelandic punks, which are reminiscent of UNA BÈSTIA INCONTROLABLE in the vocal delivery and trudging nature of the songs, just with a lot more noise and feedback in the background. (JC)
(Iron Lung)

**ROUND EYE – "Monster Vision" CD**

This is a very eclectic offering. Guitars, bass, drums, vocals, organ, lots of saxes, and some other instrumentation. Punk, for sure, but like the B-52s playing DEAD KENNEDYS covers, or the CRAVATS running through DEVO's back catalog. Or the EX with a horn section. Very spiky, angular and off-kilter, yet with lashings of melody and harmony in there, too—plus some cowboy narration! This is excellent, albeit something one would expect to have come out in 1979 when punk was a considerably broader church... (RK)
(Sudden Death)

**SCHIZOPHONICS – "Ooga Booga" 10"**

SCHIZOPHONICS are a MC5 loving band from San Diego, CA. They really channel the MC5's sound. It's kind of eerie. The vocals are overblown and the music chugs along at a high energy pace. It may not be too original, but it does sound good. (CK)
(Pig Baby)

**SCHIZOS – "Fuck Iggy Pop" EP**

This is a synth punk record completely devoid of any amount of shimmer or reverb or delay. Everything is a dead thud. There's not even really any background noise, no hum of the boom box it was recorded on. In the span of five songs they cover both OBLIVIANS and URINALS, a good indicator of the influences but also the idiocy (two covers on a 7"?) of this. Ultra rudimentary numbskull caveman pogo, the synth sounds quietly farted through a blown speaker. The drums are simple and louder than everything else and the singer yells everything in a garage turkey cool guy style. (MM)
(Neck Chop)

**SCHWACH – "Kein Bock LP"**

I wish I spoke German, so maybe I could figure out why there's a hardcore sloth wearing a hoodie with a "tofu life" pin on the cover. Is it because they're peaceful? Chill? Vegetarians? SCHWACH is a band advocating an XVX lifestyle, positivity, and friendship. If you like your hardcore uplifting, with melodic breakdowns, and an emotional vocal delivery, you'll wanna get this LP. (MW)
(Antikorper Export / Refuse)

**S.H.I.T. – "I" EP**

It's a bummer to call bullshit on a band that has been consistently good for as long as S.H.I.T. have, but this is kind of a low-effort EP. The A-side tracks consist of one one-riff instrumental and one one-riff song with vocals. The B-side picks up tremendously with "Information," a blazer with a great cascading riff, driven by aggressive drumming and a memorable vocal line. "Individuation (Twenty-Nothing)" is also a solid effort with super-bleak lyrics. This feels like a one-sided EP though—very much worth a purchase by fans for "Information" alone, while those new to the band would be well advised to seek out any one of their other EPs first. (AU)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)

**SIEGA – "Kickoutthecontrol" EP**

Really digging the cover art for this posthumous recording from Barcelona's, SIEGA. What do we have inside? Solid, straightforward hardcore punk filled with fierce spite and vitriol. There are many similarities to the contemporary Iberian sound but surprisingly the lyrics appear to be mostly delivered in English. Delivered, I might add, with such a magnificently pissed-off voice I nearly fell out of my chair. (JK)
(Disco Enfermos)

**SOCIETY'S ILLS – "Stumble" CD**

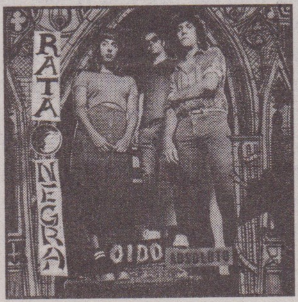
Melodic hardcore from Montreal. These guys would fit right in on Fat or Epitaph. I'm hearing STRUNG OUT, NOFX, and PENNYWISE. These guys sound tight and they do it well, but this sound has been done to death. I can't say this release stands out amongst the masses, but I'm sure you could do worse. (RL)
(self-released)

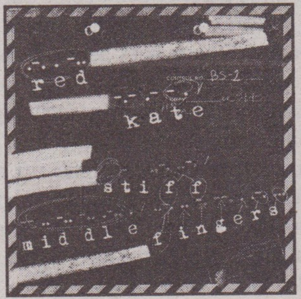
**STRAIGHTJACKET NATION – "The Wreck" 12"**

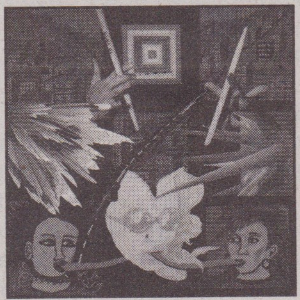
Longtime readers will remember STRAIGHTJACKET NATION as a back-in-the-day favorite of the *MRR* crew, for both their timeless hardcore attack and particularly venomous lyrics and vocals. I'm not sure if this is a "lost" recording or a new lease on life, but goddamn it sounds like classic SJN, whether they're creeping along like a classic SSD-style stomper ("Power It Up") or delivering a right-hook left-uppercut all-out attack ("The Wreck"). For the benefit of short-time readers, I will say that STRAIGHTJACKET NATION are an Australian band that combine careful study of the best of '80s USHC with the unbridled aggression of '90s Aussie bands like HEIST and RUPTURE and a touch of Scandinavian guitar wailing to create an incredibly precise and devastating approach to hardcore. If you're never heard the band, the self-released *Cheap Kicks* or *6 Song* EPs are more definitive statements of the band's essence, but this is not far behind in quality at all, and of course it's available now at a reasonable price. Recommended for fans and newcomers alike. (AU)
(Cool Death / La Vida Es Un Mus)

**STRUL – "Lennart Och Asen" LP**

Drop the needle, and hold on. Perfectly raw maximum energy Swedish hardcore in thirteen brilliant movements. I think this even outdoes their previous efforts, and the full sized platter just gives them more room to swing. *Lennart Och Asen* is an absolute clinic in SwedeCore riff construction, that unrelenting but still catchy as fukk vibe that seems



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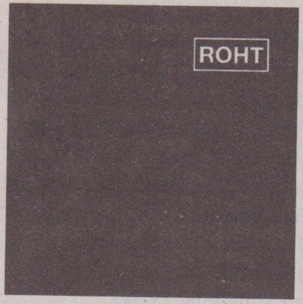
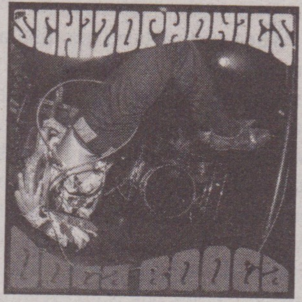
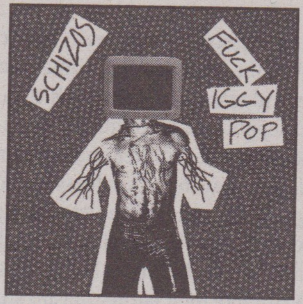
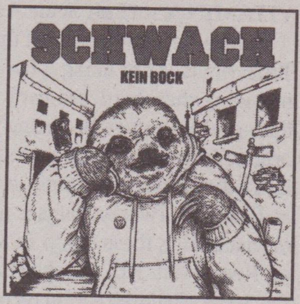



impossible for anyone else to properly pull off. Solos when appropriate, speed always, and a bass that rips through the entire mix for runs that take some of these tracks (like "Merchpunkare") from wild to insane in mere seconds. Literally every track is a pure banger (STRUL's idea of a mid-paced cool down is most bands version of full throttle hardcore) but listen to "Åter-Stellan" and you'll see what these punks mean when they say "full throttle." Everything is distorted by the sheer power in the same way that a quality garage punk record is blown out, and it makes the whole thing even more intense. Scour the bins for the weird cartoony hessian monsters on the cover and do not flip past it—if you like hardcore then you need this. This was drummer Mick Garanath's final recording before he died…the passing of a friend and comrade is never easy, but one should be proud to leave this as a final document. (WN)
(Ken Rock)

**STRUL – "Lennart Och Asen" LP**
Not as good as their other records, but still decent. STRUL play noisy, relentless hardcore that's full of anthemic and often frantic riffing in a Braintree Hardcore-meets-*State Oppression* sort of way, with a vocalist that's screaming like he's at his wit's end. The individual songs are well put together, but it feels like there is absolutely no cohesion as an LP. This could have made a far more focused and hard-hitting EP. (DG)
(Ken Rock)

**STUPIDITY – "10 Years Of Stupidity" CD**
This is a compilation of tracks from STUPIDITY's four albums, a single track and one unreleased tune to celebrate ten years in the biz. The music is hard rock'n'roll with a rockabilly-tinge. The vocals are gruff and the beats pounding. Calling themselves STUPIDITY might seem a bit too harsh, but I'll trust them. (CK)
(Go Fast)

**SWINEHOOD – "Looks Like Shit to Me" EP**
I have no idea what "Hippie Cum," "Nazi Train Ride," or "I Feel Fine in the Welfare Line" are about, but um, there you go. SWINEHOOD plays fast, noisy, straight ahead hardcore punk with scummy vocals. Eleven songs that are barely distinguishable from each other, but it's all catchy enough and musically decent overall. Just the thing to get a bunch of drunk spiky punks circle pitting, beers in hand. (DG)
(Ken Rock)

**SYNDROME 81 / URBAN SAVAGE – split EP**
Two tracks each from a couple top tier modern Oi! bands from France and Sweden, respectively. SYNDROME 81 continues in the tradition of their previous output. If you like punk simple and catchy with a persistent gruff shout and maybe a melodic guitar weaved in here and there, these guys are about the best around. Neither of these tracks is a game changer, but they're perfectly enjoyable and necessary for fans. I really hope I get to see this band some day! I will actually dance. The URBAN SAVAGE side isn't hitting me as hard as their last EP did (that song "Cop Riot"!), but it's still good. Burly and dark Oi!, like a tougher-sounding CRIMINAL DAMAGE. Shit gets fast at the very end and I'm all ready to rip the place apart, and then it's over! Anyway, great pair-up and solid spit. (MA)
(Offside / Primator / Savage)

**TEAR OFF/CLEAN UP – "Tha Second Winter" EP**
Toledo, OH is a dead city in the deader Northwest Ohio area, but its punk scene refuses to die. Up the 419! TEAR OFF/CLEAN UP skillfully continue the city's long tradition of DIY punk of all shades, picking up where bands like THE FIGHT WITHIN, BLACKEYE, and SINDIKIT left off. Recorded in a house turned recording studio, this EP is just one of the many available examples of the Rust Belt's manic energy. Now, we just need someone to revive the *Toledo Punk Rock Soundtrack* series. (RH)
(self-released)

**TIGER TANK – "B-List Singer" LP**
This is rock'n'roll. It's catchy and melodic, with a nice full sound without sounding over-produced. This is rock'n'roll first and punk second, and it makes you want to bounce your head, tap your feet and sing-along. There's also some pretty nifty guitar work that might just bring out the air-guitarist that lives in all of us. (KK)
(Burger / Iron Fox / Wiener)

**VICIOUS X REALITY – "Our Common Fight" EP**
VICIOUS X REALITY is from southern Poland and plays youth crew-style, straightedge, vegan hardcore. Some of the tracks sing about friends growing apart or staying together, which just gives me strong GORILLA BISCUITS vibes. Mostly, it's 1989-style straightedge (breakdowns and all) with little variation, but done well. I've just never understood why these crews think that their lifestyle is superior just because they're sober and don't eat meat. I live my life that way too, but I think drunk people are fun! Anyway, if you're looking for Polish straightedge, this record is good. (GH)
(Black Wednesday / Refuse)

**VIDA RUIM – "Samango 16" EP**
Rad driving punk rock from Brazil. Somewhat thrashing and somewhat surfy, in a BLACK FLAG hardcore way. This reminds of Italy's SMART COPS or LA PIVORA from about ten years ago. Nice bass work, drumming and momentum to these eight songs. Definitely worth checking out. (JC)
(Zoom Discos)

**VISIONS OF WAR – "Swine Parade" CD**
This CD features the two of this German band's previously released LPs, *Shit Parade* and *King of Swines*. They have a pretty straightforward D-beat crust sound with guttural vocals. They remind me of WARCOLLAPSE, but not quite as dark. *King of Swines* is the better LP of the two. It's much rawer, it's faster, it has better riffs, and the vocals sound way more evil. I say forget this CD and track down that record instead. (BA)
(Apathy Never / Deviance / Power It Up)

**VITAMIN X – "Full Scale Assault" LP**

Refuse Records reissue of this LP that originally came out in 2008 on Tankcrimes. After being a fan of most of the stuff that had come prior, including their hardcore-hard rock hybrid transition (of which this is their peak), I remember being super disappointed with this LP when it originally came out. Despite the cartoon factor, I'm definitely getting into it more this time around, and would even say that it's at least as good as *Bad Trip*. Twenty songs is too long though, and maybe it's nostalgia or visualizing these songs in a live context, but I'm digging their take on Reagan-era HC with hard rock leads, which I think is bolstered by the Steve "Fedora" Albini recording. I still like their earlier / faster stuff better, and don't listen to them with any regularity anymore, but if you don't already own this, here's another chance. (DG)
(Refuse)

**VOICE OF DOOM – "Screams In Space" CDEP**

One EP in the late '80s, then silence for twenty-plus years before reforming and then continuing on with 40% of the original lineup in tact. Second tier horror punk that started well after MISFITS' heyday. The *Faith Is Torn* EP holds up reasonably well, while these modern recordings sound predictably dated and kinda like an adult version of a thirty-year-old horror punk band. Definite tracks in here, but that moment when you realize that the only legit banger on the disc ("Alice Sweet Alice") is about stalking an underage girl…well, it's just so predictable and boring. (WN)
(Pyrrhic Victory)

**XETAS – "The Tower" LP**

Austin's XETAS have gone with a tarot theme for their second LP, a half melodic, half discordant punk album with sprinkles of hardcore. I hear some strains of RVIVR, but *The Tower* keeps you on your toes; the second it starts to get fun there's a key change or another switch and things get chaotic again. The vocals verge on screamo by way of LEATHERFACE—not sure what's up with that. I could also do without the group choruses. "The Machine" was definitely my favorite track, featuring the bleak refrain "*Get me off this life support, I'm fine.*" If you like your hardcore and pop punk at the same time you'll probably dig this. (AB)
(12XU)

**XYLITOL – "It'll Slip" EP**

Vinyl treatment of the XYLITOL demo from last year. This Olympia band throws down five tracks of hyper-speed pogo punk, set apart by catchy songwriting and a real wild vocalist who sounds like an electrocuted cat. I love the lyrics, which ecstatically reject assimilation into a shit world of capitalist alienation, state-sanctioned inclusion, and tech-mediated socialization. "Femme Shoulder Devil" helpfully suggests over a dozen ways to embrace the void. I'll be trying most of them before their new EP drops this summer. (SW)
(25 Diamonds)

**YACØPSAE – "Gästezimmer" CD**

When you've been grinding and blasting for twenty-five years and you want to do something fun…? You are allowed. Thirty-two tracks in just under thirteen minutes, each with guest vocals from people the band has encountered and befriended over the years. Each guest vocalist wrote their own lyrics and a blurb about their relationship with the band (cool) and there are sixteen different songs each given the business by one male and one female vocalist (side A / side B on the wax, also cool). As a concept? Hats off, this is killer. And as a grind record? Seriously…. find me a modern band that can touch these fukkrs…..every release is stellar and this one is no exception. Congratulations. (WN)
(Power It Up)

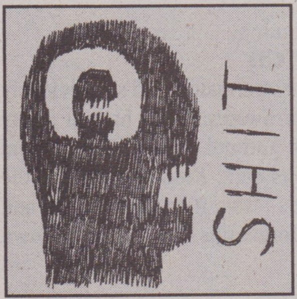
**V/A – "Hamburger Saignant Volume Two" LP**

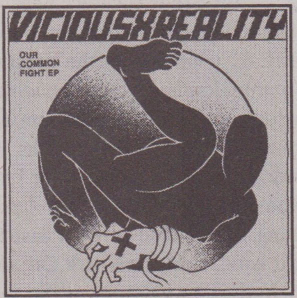
Compilations are usually a collage of hits and misses, this one skips most of the misses! Will make you grab your *Pebbles* comps and head for the basement. If you are a gassed in the garage fiend that like things nasty and frantic this is gonna satiate your needs in a most necessary fashion, wild sounds of France and Belgium in a time machine style where you can't tell if it's 1966 or 2017. From JAROBIL SABOR to DRUGGY PIZZA, the fuzz is here, ASPHALT have a *Bloodstains Across France* feel and there are bands that sound like they got lost on the Sunset Strip on the way to the love-in, like WARM SWORDS (who also sorta have a Flying Nun feel?!?!). BAAL clearly have the map to the underworld in their clove cigarettes. And if you are trashed and are looking for the next train to oblivion MAGIQUE SPENCER has your ticket. There are desolate teenage anthems to the end of time (the HANDS / PRECHEUR LOUP) and frantic floor movers for dissolute could-bes (AVENUE Z). This is a cool slice of a couple countries' genre exercises, with songs sung in French and English! There are also, of course, a band that sound like they would have supported BLUE CHEER because TY SEGALL's popularity has cursed us to bad rockisms, and even some sorta ALLAH LAS beachisms, but don't worry your Beatle boots—this comp is in good bad taste and there's something for every mood. Fuzzed out Euro snot for desperate dancers and doomsters. (LG)
(Frantic City)

**V/A – "Pajtás Daloljunk X: Magyar Punk 1982–1986" LP**

As the title suggests, this is a collection of Hungarian punk from the '80s, gathering demo and live recordings from T'34, BIZTONSÁGI TANÁCS, DER TROTTEL, MARINA REVUE, KOORDINÁCIÓ B, INVÁSIÓ '84 (personal faves—the song "New Punks" is practically worth the whole record), AURORA CIRKALO, and TIZEDES MEG A TÖBBIEK. Sound quality unfortunately relegates this to the "purists only" section, but punks seeking unknown early '80s Soviet Bloc punk and hardcore are already well aware of this. If you're looking to get (far) off of the beaten path and have a high tolerance for tape hiss, then this one comes highly recommended. (WN)
(Trottel)







**V/A – "State Line Machine" LP**

The post-hardcore ghosts of ENVY and THURSDAY haunt this entire collection of three Philadelphia bands (EASY CREATURES, HOLD DOWN THE OCEAN, SON & HEIR) and one Delaware band (WORTH). It makes total sense that the DE / PA state line referenced in the title of this collection is only a short drive from THURSDAY's New Jersey home. EASY CREATURES took a master class in post-hardcore guitar riffs and layered them like a sticky mosh pit salad bed under their vocalist's best homage to Dennis Lyxzén from REFUSED. HOLD DOWN THE OCEAN play in the slower, dronier, talk-vocalier arena of ENVY and, more recently, LA DISPUTE. Their first offering, "The Gulf of Mexico," really showcases this. Where EASY CREATURES used their instruments to set up their vocalist, SON & HEIR mix everything together in an intense confetti so that nearly overpowering guitars meet nearly overpowering vocals to create a dizziness inducing intensity. WORTH are easily the heaviest band of the quartet, allowing their vocalist to nearly vomit anger all over the mic on "Dead Weight." There is a healthy load of adult angst stewing in this collection, and, as rare as it is for a four-way split to be perfectly listenable all the way through, this is one of those rarities. Pick this up. (RH)
(Dullest)

**V/A – "Steel Evening Silent Floor" CD**

Dunno if this is considered a comp or a four-way split, but the bands are EXCUSE TO TRAVEL, JAGINGIR., DANCEBEACH, and ADA. EXCUSE TO TRAVEL play Warped Tour-ready melodic punk with plenty of soaring guitar parts that would probably get mischaracterized as "emo" by people who came of age in the last decade. Objectively, it's quite good, and brings to mind being under 21 and going on life-changing journeys. JAGINGIR. play two songs of awkward, earnest alternative rock with a jangly yet big guitar sound and a singer who can't quite hit the high notes he's trying for, followed by a six-minute dirge and a shorter late BLACK FLAG dissonant number. DANCEBEACH sound like if the REFUSED were a bar punk band. ADA occupies the musical territory between emo and early alternative rock, with a vocalist that yells sporadically, and sometimes rarely, on their four songs. (DG)
(Hardcore Kitchen)

# CONTACT INFORMATION

**25 Diamonds:** 25diamonds.com
**Agipunk:** agipunk.com
**Agromosh:** agromosh.com
**Alternative Tentacles:** alternativetentacles.com
**Amazing Madness:** gandh-x.com
**Antena Krzyku:** antenakrzyku.pl
**The Antidon'ts:** theantidonts.bandcamp.com
**Antipop:** antipoprecords.co.uk
**Apathy Never:** apathy.never@orange.fr
**Area Pirata:** areapirata.com
**The Arson Project:** thearsonproject.bandcamp.com
**Bad Matt:** badmattrecords.com
**Bad Sam:** kriminalgood@gmail.com
**Beat Generation:** munsterama.com
**Beer City:** PO Box 1759, Milwaukee, WI 53201, beercity.com
**Beta Boys:** betaboys69.bandcamp.com
**Black Site:** black-site.org
**Black Wednesday:** Black-wednesday.pl
**Blackout Brigade:** blackoutbrigade.org
**Boss Tuneage:** bosstuneage.com
**Burger:** burgerrecords.com
**Byllepest Distro:** byllepestdistro.blogspot.com
**Cleopatra:** cleorecs.com
**CV:** c/o Rafael Manrique, AP 21-002, M.D.M. Coyoacan, Higuera H23, CP 04021, Ciudad de Mexico, MEXICO
**D4MT:** d4mtlabsinc.bandcamp.com
**Deranged:** derangedrecords.com
**Deviance:** sucette.kanalhysterik.com
**Die Laughing:** dielaughingrecords.com
**Discos Enfermos:** discosenfermos.com
**Dullest:** dullestrecords.bandcamp.com, dullestrecords@gmail.com
**Emancypunx:** emancypunx.com
**F. City Rex:** 2040 Alvin St., Toledo, OH 43607
**Fat Wreck Chords:** 2196 Palou Ave, San Francisco, CA 94124, fatwreck.com
**Feel It:** feelitrecordsshop.com
**Frantic City:** franticcity.bandcamp.com
**Geriatric:** nearlydead.bandcamp.com
**Get Better:** getbetterrecords.com
**Ghost Highway Recordings:** ghosthighwayrecordings.com
**Go Fast:** stupidity.se
**Ground Sound:** askaskask.org
**Hardcore Kitchen:** hardcore.exblog.jp
**Hysteria:** 538 Johnson Ave #203, Brooklyn, NY 11237
**Ill Faith:** facebook.com/IllFaithRecords
**Iron Lung:** lifeironlungdeath.blogspot.com
**JUST4FUN:** just4funrecords.bigcartel.com
**Ken Rock:** kensplastic@hotmail.com
**La Vida Es Un Mus:** lavidaesunmus.com
**Let's Pretend:** PO Box 1663, Bloomington, IN 47402, letspretendrecords.com
**Los Caidos:** losxcaidos.bandcamp.com
**Mandible:** 127 Ryerson St #2, Brooklyn, NY 11205, Mandiblerecords.storeenvy.com
**Melters:** melters.storeenvy.com
**NE!:** nerecords@hotmail.com
**Neck Chop:** neck-chop-records.myshopify.com
**Neon Taste:** neontasterecords.bandcamp.com
**No Ego:** noegodiscos.bigcartel.com
**Nothing of Merit:** nothingofmerit.bandcamp.com
**Offside:** offsiderecords.fr
**Otherworldly Apocalypse:** citadel666.bandcamp.com, unholycitadel@gmail.com
**Our Future:** ourfuturerecords.bandcamp.com
**Pig Baby:** pigbabyrecords.com
**Pleasure Squad:** facebook.com/psquad
**Power It Up:** Zum Holzfelde 12, 31226 Peine, GERMANY, power-it-up.de
**Pyrrhic Victory:** PO Box 412, Lyndhurst, NJ 07071, www.pyrrhicvictoryrecordings.com
**Refuse:** refusemusic.net
**Rindeherz:** rinderherzrecords.ch
**Rudio Total:** rudiototal.info
**Rumbletowne:** rumbletowne.com
**Ryvvolte:** ryvvolterecords.storenvy.com
**Sad Pad:** sadpadrecords.com
**Salad Days:** saladdaysrecords.bandcamp.com
**Side Two:** side-two.com
**Sin Tremores:** s1ntremores@yahoo.com
**Society's Ills:** societysills.bandcamp.com
**Sophomore Lounge:** sophomoreloungerecords.com
**Straight & Alert:** straightandalert.com
**Sudden Death:** suddendeath.com
**Svoboda:** svoboda-records.com
**Tanker:** tankerchaos.free.fr
**THC+DIY:** thcanddirecords.bandcamp.com
**To Live a Lie:** tolivealie.com
**Total Punk:** floridasdying.com
**Up The Punx:** upthepunxrecords.blogspot.com
**Violated:** eastfieldrailpunk.co.uk
**Wanda:** wandarecords.de
**Warsaw Pact:** warsawpact.bandcamp.com
**Youth Riot:** youthriotrecords.com

# DEMOS

All cassettes and CD-Rs are reviewed in this section. Send yours to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA and include your contact information. Submissions without artwork will not be considered.

(BA) Michael Battleaxe
(HB) Heather Blotto
(JA) Juliana Almeida
(JB) Julia Booze
(MA) Matt Badenhop
(MD) Michael De Toffoli
(WN) Robert Collins

**ALOUETTE** – *Psychomotor EP* – I've heard that if you want to sound like an influence then you shouldn't listen to that influence, but instead listen to their influences. This band is a great example of that, with a very well-crafted COBAIN-esque creation, making a lot of the same correct decisions, but coming at it from a fresh modern perspective. They aren't emulating the sound, just purely getting there on their own. Coming from raw garage punk and college rock obviously, but also slowing down to incorporate gloomy groove metal, culminating into heavy driving music with coherent, discernible melody. It reminds me of when I was young and first discovering music like this, but I was still able to appreciate them as their own sound and accomplishment. (MD) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, alouetterocks.bandcamp.com)

**BATO** – Meat and potatoes hardcore from Virginia Beach. While there aren't any particularly memorable or shining moments, they've got the relentless pulse and persistence of DOUBLE NEGATIVE. I dig. Lyrical criticisms of bad friends, pharmaceutical solutions to hyper children, apathetic whiners, baby-havers, racists, and religious fanatics. (MA) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, batovb.bandcamp.com)

**THE CHERRIES** – A whole album in a tape format from this San Francisco based band that reminds me of PAVEMENT, or maybe the PIXIES because of the dual female / male vocals. (JA) (17-song cassette, lyrics included, dacherries.bandcamp.com)

**CHROMOSOME DAMAGE** – Punishing yet ecstatic hardcore from Columbus, Ohio. It's just as fast and loud as you want hardcore to be but maintains a posi vibe. Includes some very catchy breakdown riffs and grunts. The track "Bleach Blonde" seems to be a criticism of affluent women in the vein of the ADOLESCENTS's "LA Girl," although lyrics are not included so it's hard to be sure. While that might be some legit class-criticism, it comes off as dated and reminds me of how the punk dude in the movie *Valley Girl* is actually in love with the preppie rich girl that he mocks. He pretends to hate her only to preempt the rejection he expects. Something doesn't sit right with a group of dudes tearing down women on a superficial basis for performing roles prescribed by patriarchal standards of femininity. I mean, if it's truly capitalism and rich people that you hate, why not write a song about how huge companies exploit women's insecurities in order to profit from selling toxic cosmetic products with impunity, or something, instead? (HB) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, chromosomedamage.bandcamp.com)

**COMPASSION FATIGUE** – *Dogs, Dogs, Dogs, Dogs* – Snotty hardcore punk. Rough (in the right way) and feisty bursts of energy… manic distortion-free guitar abuse, panic-stricken vocals, and the shit is fast. The first song is the worst song (which is weird), but the shit grew on me fast. (WN) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, compassionfatigue.bandcamp.com)

**CONMAN** – Scathing, punchy hardcore from Toronto. Sounds convincingly like it was recorded in the '80s (in a good way) and definitely embraces some '80s hardcore influences—7 SECONDS comes to mind mostly because of the raspy, disillusioned vocals. Plus, added bonus of some thoughtful and dissonant breakdown riffs squeezed in between the raging fast parts. (HB) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, conman-to.bandcamp.com)

**CROSS CLASS** – Brutal, relentless deluge of hardcore fury from Sacramento, California. The tape has six songs from a fourteen-song full-length coming out "soon" on an undisclosed format. The fast parts are super tight and there's room for getting a little weird, with guitar feedback, screeching, and growling thown in to spice things up. My first reaction hearing this was "oh fuck, better get away from wherever the pit is gonna be," so that's probably a good sign for many of you. (HB) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, crossclass.bandcamp.com)

**CUNTROACHES** – I want to make something clear: at this very moment, I think that Germany's CUNTROACHES are the most important and life-affirming band on the planet. Period. The first demo blew me away, but this one…FUCK ME. Somehow they have become more in control and more chaotic at the same time, and the intensity borders on bleak / black metal darkness while the music is just a relentless ramshackle freight train. Noise punk of the highest order. Maximum chaos and total insanity…but mesmerizing in a black hole psychedelic way that is beyond words. I simply do not understand how this music exists, and how it can be so good... eternal hails. (WN) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, cuntroaches.bandcamp.com)

**DISVEIN** – *Enmity* – 2015 recording from this San Jose outfit, who have already established themselves as heayweights in the heavy / crust / grind world. Vocals are more abrasive than on subsequent recordings, and the assault wasn't quite as focused as it has become, but fans of relentless clenched-fist crust / HC with multiple vocals and merciless blasts will eat this up. (WN) (13-song CD-R, lyrics included, disvein.bandcamp.com)

**DRY ERASE** – These Oakland-based fellows have mastered syncopated notes, purposefully off-beat repetitive motions and electro vibes that have robotic vocal delivery. Synth-dominant with few hooks, mathematical competitions between patterns. The instrumentation includes both real drums and a drum machine which makes for nice layers and unusual rhythms. They describe themselves as anarcho-post-punk and I have *no idea* where they came up with that. (JB) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, vacantstarerecords@gmail.com)

**DWI / JERRY GRIND** – DWI is metallic and thrashy with triggered drums and goofy vocal stylings like GWAR (except not funny and no cool costumes or theatrics) would do. JERRY GRIND is two of the same people and is heavier and more metallic. "Pansy" is not homophobic like I was expecting, but still pretty embarrassing. Stinker. (MA) (12-song-cassette, lyrics not included, weirdbeardrecordings@gmail.com)

**FATHERS DAY** – *Goodbye 1506* – Live recording of this band playing what appears to be their beloved and now-gone DIY space, the 1506 Trunk Space. This band is self-described as "angry dad punk-n-roll," and I think that's fair, except it's a little fast for rock'n'roll and they forgot to add the part about the tired, reactionary shock-rock schtick (track ten, "Get in the Kitchen," and track eleven, "My Daughter's a Slut," are really just the tip of the shit-iceberg). These dudes seem pretty rockin' for a bunch of dads, but I wish this generation of punk dads raising kids had a better grasp of how not to celebrate all the toxic crap that was forced on earlier generations. This CD is a compact synopsis of why, in the proverbial sense, "dad" sucks. Hopefully their kids will inspire and teach them how to be cooler. (HB) (18-song, lyrics not included, fathersday.bandcamp.com)

**FUTURO** – *A Torre Da Derrota* – They just toured the US and have some vinyl stuff out but this tape is their most recent release! Been following them since day one since they're from my hometown, São Paulo, Brazil. Garage punk with psychedelic influences, but you can still hear their raw roots since they all came from a hardcore punk background. They always surprise me with a new element in each release, and this time it's definitely Mila's vocals bringing a whole new personality to their sound. HÜSKER DÜ meets the WHO meets early BLACK FLAG meets VIOLETA DE OUTONO. (JA) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, futuro.bandcamp.com)

**HELLS** – *Paradise* – Meaty '90s-styled mid-paced hardcore that reminds me of early Hydra Head and the like. Ultra-heavy, fronted by harsh mid-range vocals that set you on edge, and plenty of slow moshes that (thankfully) just rely on the E-chug…though there is still plenty of open E. Less technical that BOTCH or CAVE IN, but HELLS hit the same nerve with me, and it's a nerve that hasn't been jiggled in a while. (WN) (6-song CD-R, lyrics not included, givethemhells@gmail.com)

**JAILBUS** – *In Pursuit Of The Nasty Boot* – Stripped down Midwest hardcore of the highest order. Grit in teeth, heart on sleeve, hard stomping top-notch North American punk rock. (WN) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, mrpaulogelsby@gmail.com, c/o Paul O., 214 N. Gilbert Street, Iowa City, IA 52245)

**JINX** – Soaring and anthemic indie punk that probably gets described as hardcore in some (mainstream) circles. I confess that the sounds fall in the "not my thing" category, but Russia's JINX nail the post-grunge stadium punk thing, and dish out songs that are far more memorable than you might expect from the words of some bullshit reviewer in California (that's me!). (WN) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, jinxrock.bandcamp.com)

**LIGHTING MIND FREQUENCY** – *7 Billion People Under Mind Control* – This Italian band shows us what it sounds like when street punks let the weed sink in. Guess what…it sounds fucking great! They do some pretty standard but solid GBH type jams, but they add just enough stony flair to keep it interesting. So forget about the cider, and pass me the doobie! (BA) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, matteino-tftd@autistici.org)

**LOOSE VEINS** – *Observations* – I'm always interested in solo projects, so it was a good surprise when I found this one in the demos pile! LOOSE VEINS is Joni Kyynäräisen's project, and the sound is a mix of HÜSKER DÜ with heavier guitars and Scandinavian influences like MASSHYSTERI. (JA) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, looseveins.bandcamp.com)

**MICROAGGRESSIONS** – *Shit's Looking Grim* – Catchy (almost) Oi! sounds from the Northwest with a serious '80s Midwest bent on the vocals. Think forceful but melodic, with a perfectly lazy lilt at the end of some of the lines. Guitar leads put it over the top, making already good tracks hopelessly infectious. (WN) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, cosmonautmusicpdx.bandcamp.com, 1930 SW 13th Avenue, Portland, OR 97201)

**MOTORMOUTH MABEL** – *Rough Cuts* – If you look past all the pointless in-between-song sound clip filler you may appreciate some rough punk four-track recordings. MOTORMOUTH MABEL appears to be here to fuck with you a bit and maybe make you laugh, but there's a few good trashy-sounding punk numbers hidden in there, as well as a GG ALLIN cover. (MA) (?-song cassette, lyrics not included, motormouthmabel.bandcamp.com)

**MR. WRONG** – *Distraction* – Maybe it's like *Valley Girl* meets Riot Grrrl, or FUZZBOX as a stripped down garage punk duo. It's syrupy sweet and it swings, but MR. WRONG have serious teeth lurking just under the surface. Apparently they are a trio now…look forward to the next installment. (WN) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, cosmonautmusicpdx.bandcamp.com, 1930 SW 13th Avenue, Portland, OR 97201)

**NUTRITION** – Freaky and somewhat lo-fi, this is a cassingle made by a two-piece group, accented with minimalist black and white artwork. A little fast, a little jangly, a little twangy, and a little spastic. It doesn't fit in a genre-box. It is part of a series of nine cassingle releases. DIY is so weird and I'm super glad it exists. (HB) (2-song cassette, lyrics not included, no contact)

**PATHETIC SOCIETY** – This is some straight-ahead, urgent hardcore out of San Diego. They have a driving, late nineties feel, like FROM ASHES RISE, but not so much harmony. What they do have is solid riffs and an intensity that will get your blood boiling! Features an EXPLOITED cover, but I won't hold that against them. Check them out! (BA) (16-song cassette, lyrics included, compressedthought.bandcamp.com)

**PERIOD BOMB** – *Live Tour Tape 1* – Danceable post punk similar to X-RAY SPEX but with an innovative and deep creativity. Think the raw personal expletives of Poly Styrene, with the unhinged chaos of jazz fusion, a well-focused punk drive, and with a vocal pedalboard to give it a 3RA1N1AC palette. I literally thought that the cassette was damaged or that my tape deck was warping it into sounding like a full-fledged wash of unstable sounds, but then they have these on-the-street interviews with randos that bring the whole thing back to reality. I couldn't process this recording until I saw them play in a living room in Oakland and it all made sense. They really do sound like that, and they really do create a swirl of manic expression. This tape is the perfect representation of what this band's life is from city to city, load in and out to afterparty, and mental state that they experience and bring into their live show. (MD) (20-song cassette, lyrics not included, 877-577-BOOM)

**PERIOD BOMB** – *Permanently Wet* – Really cool genre-exploding punk from Miami. Damaged arty tunes done in a fun way, coming off totally unpretentious, some keys, some saxophone…Online videos further the intrigue. Lots of voice manipulation to dement the senses. Much of it might be improvised. Whether it is or not, it totally works. Kinda puts the current "mutant punk" trend to shame. Not comparable to DEVO. I found some tour dates and it seems PERIOD BOMB just came through here last month, so I totally fucked up. If you're not boring, stop snoozing

on this band. (MA) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, periodbomb.bandcamp.com)

**PMMA** – *Draw the Line* – Four synth-centered tracks, blending '80s dance pop with hardcore, sometimes regular flavor hardcore, sometimes melodic hardcore. At times dramatic, and at other times more aggressive. The synth-centered dance songs are on point and the dance beats are so precise I had to check to see if the drums were programmed. Also, the cover art is extremely solemn and serious which adds to the anachronistic aesthetic. When exactly was it that bands stopped taking themselves so seriously? (HB) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, pmma.bandcamp.com)

**PREEN** – *Keystoner* – Philly's PREEN often sounds like NIRVANA on 33 when meant for 45, but with a flat, distorted, deadpan vocal style. Definitely a stoner vibe, especially on "Ripe 4 Rotting." Drones and moans galore, with a groovy riff here and there. (MA) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, preen.bandcamp.com)

**PRODUCT LUST** – Threatening and angular darkwave with fierce, echo-laden screamed vocals. There are moments that recall a creepy CHRISTIAN DEATH vibe, balanced out by exploratory missions down other strange corridors of the crumbling Victorian mansion of darkwave, including squealing guitar solos, bouncy theatrical parts, and mathy-noisy tangents. Not to be missed for lovers of the darkwave arts. (HB) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, productlust.bandcamp.com)

**REIZ** – First thing you notice is the fukkn tracks. So many modern bands are great at setting a vibe, bursting forth with tons of energy…but then after it's over you're like "were there any songs?" Germany's REIZ have dropped a demo packed with tracks. Memorable tracks. Stylistically diverse, but never erratic, they combine classic '80s dark Deutschpunk with killer driving contemporary sounds (I hear NEON PISS vocals and SPITS irreverence, and I hear EA80 oozing through the slower bits). Dance your ass off when they kick it up, and then let REIZ sink it. Very, very excellent demo. (WN) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, reizreizreiz.bandcamp.com)

**RASHOMON** – Japanese hardcore from DC, and it's fucking great! It is in fact sung in Japanese and sounds somewhere between old ADK stuff like ABURADAKO and KIKEIJI, and some of the better Blood Sucker Records stuff. The guitar riffs are phenomenal but do not sound metallic at all. The vocals are exciting and lend a lot to the high-energy feel of this recording. Basically this rips and it's pretty short and I'm begging for more. The j-card even looks cool as shit, and you'd buy it hoping it would sound like this. Get it! (MA) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, rashomondc.bandcamp.com)

**RUIN BY DESIGN** – The band is from Virginia. I like all the political flyers included in the package (like the one about "what to do in a protest") which they probably hand out at their shows. Music is a bit hard to describe, but I would say mostly mid-tempo with rock'n'roll riffs and some D-beat parts. (JA) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, ruinbydesign.bandcamp.com)

**SERENO** – *Advinhar O Futuro Das Estrelas* – Always glad to review bands from Brazil. Not sure if I can call them shoegaze but the spirit is there. Maybe the less distorted guitar licks and soft, clean vocals in Portuguese deviate a bit from the style. Reminds me of an early-years, more introspective LOS HERMANOS. (JA) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, serenofrio.bandcamp.com)

**SHARK JUMPER** – Summertime day drinking, ultra-addictive catchy punk. Male / female vocal trades give the recording a dark, off-putting edge that contrasts nicely with upbeat tracks that would fit nicely on the early No Idea roster. Dirty, punk, poppy, innocent, earnest. (WN) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, punklegendssharkjumper@gmail.com, J. Evans III, 78 Sylvan Street, #2, Rutherford, NJ 07070)

**SOLARIZED** – Upbeat, snotty hardcore. It seems influenced by early LA hardcore and early UK punk at the same time. Like SEX PISTOLS meets *Damaged*-era BLACK FLAG, which is an unlikely but totally excellent combination. Nuanced, poetic lyrics address queer liberation and the trauma of white supremacy in both concrete and metaphysical terms. A radical sound of a revolution that is happening without asking permission, rejecting dominant structures of meaning or systems of knowledge. It's hard to balance art and politics in punk. Slipping too far in either direction diminishes the potential to create music that is truly relevant and emotionally gripping. SOLARIZED gets the balance just right and the result is impressive. (HB) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, solarized.bandcamp.com)

**STUPID KARATE** – *Punk is a Free Pricing Corpse* – French hardcore band that sounds like a dead ringer for late '90s AGNOSTIC FRONT, with a few additional blastbeats. Three originals and a wacky cover of "Pet Sematary." Ouch. Why? I appreciate STUPID KARATE's sense of humor and they're a totally competent band, but I'll politely pass. (MA) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, stupidkarate@gmail.com)

**SUBVERSE** – Spanish-language femme-fronted shouty and atonal hardcore, originating from Berlin with consistent speed and powerful drumming. They cover RUDIMENTARY PENI and there aren't too many catchy moments, but it comes with a CRASS-styled inspirational poster about community resistance and anti-capitalist action. The lyrics are in a really cool booklet with stark images of soldiers, workers, the houseless, etc. and are straight up pissed, and spirited, against macho culture and borders, and for subversion, action, and questioning privilege. (JB) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, subversepunk@riseup.net

**TIMELINE** – This one took a while to grow on me, but while I write these words I am more than sold. Mid-tempo and emotive straightedge hardcore from Russia, TIMELINE crush you with an internal intensity instead of just riffs… you can practically hear the singer pounding his fist on his chest. Presented with layers of guitars and a pace that never exceeds a slow mosh, TIMELINE creep up on you. The right kind of emotional hardcore for this reviewer. (WN) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, circledrecords.bandcamp.com)

**TRUE SPORTSMANSHIP** – The guitar and vocals are featured most prominently, and while they're interesting, I wish the drums weren't so buried. It gives the recording a quirky feel, which is maybe what they're going for. Stylistically it's pretty hard to pin down. Definitely part emo, some alt rock, and a bit of noise rock thrown in. Some of the guitar lines are pretty hooky (the playing reminds me a bit of VEXX) and the vocals sometimes do a call and response thing, the call being melodic and the response more hollered. Decent stuff, but suffers from lack of beat. (MA) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, truesportsmanship.bandcamp.com)

**TV MOMS** – Dark and dreamy college radio sounds straight out of my "alternative" music adolescence. Fans of TEENAGE FANCLUB, early Matador, '90s Merge Records catalog will want to take note. (WN) (11-song CD-R, lyrics not included, (414) 213-5853, jainsbooking@gmail.com)

**WASTE LAYER** – *Abuse Of Freedom* – Whoa. A fukkn freight train of blistering and blasting hardcore / powerviolence. Freakishly fast, with some serious meandering prog riffing and a ferocity that I can't really even describe. There is not one wasted second on this demo. Controlled chaos meets breakneck

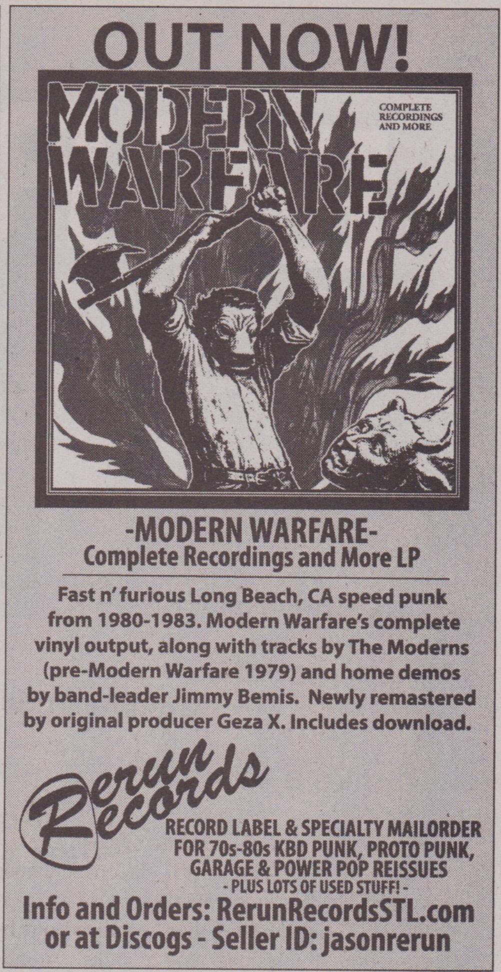
hardcore and gets weird. Fukkn love it. (WN) (12-song cassette, lyrics included, cvanet@gmail.com, $4ppd c/o C. Van Etten, 1907 Bragg Street Apt #2, Atlanta, GA 30341)

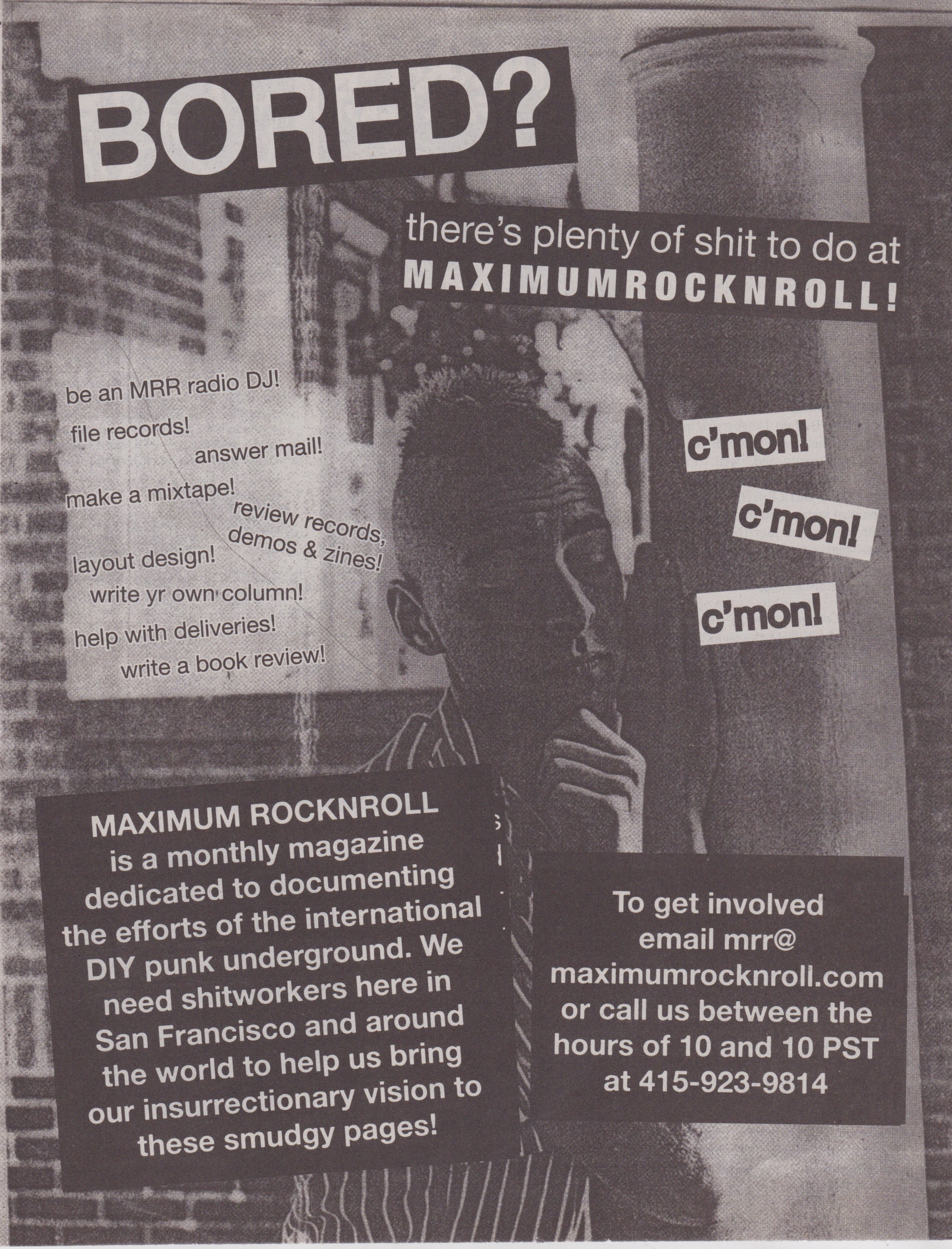
**WATCHDOG** – Heavy-hitting, growly hardcore with simple riffs that get under your skin and resonate so that you don't even realize you're headbanging and making tense claw-hands until it's too late and everyone on the bus is just trying not to stare. Seriously why can't hardcore be all breakdowns, because aren't those everyone's favorite parts anyway? Or is that like frosting without cake? The lyrics are included, and while they are definitely printed too small to read, it looks like they have something to say about hating cops. (HB) (4-song cassette, lyrics kind of included, slow-death-records.bandcamp.com)

**YELLOW HOUSE** – *Songs From Limbo* – Shoegaze from Buffalo. I keep trying not to say this, but I'm checking all these BELLE AND SEBASTIAN songs and, well, YELLOW HOUSE kinda sounds like a louder and distorted-guitar BELLE AND SEBASTIAN. Harmonious vocals and rock drums glued together with guitar fuzz. Not offensive to my ears—maybe fans of the style oughta seek this out. (MA) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, mattdistasio@gmail.com)

**V/A** – *CLR Compilation Vol. 1* – Very eclectic comp from Miami that has a super impressive range. Starting with garage punk then moving to hardcore, then dipping into very artistic and creative weirdo post-wave punk rock. Then there's an electronic deep house corner of the tape which has the intensity and drive that the other punk tracks do, but with their brand of dark consistent beats. It ends appropriately by sinking down into really sludgy metal, all building to a straight noise track to blow the whole experience's brains out. Gotta love tapes that get better the more times you listen to them, and this one really shows all that this label can put out. (MD) (17-song cassette, lyrics not included, crasslipsrecords.bandcamp.com)

**V/A** – *Teen Wolf Rocks Vol. 1* – Finnish punk comp with two bands I know (KUUDES SILMÄ, MAAILMANLOPPU) and a grip of newcomers like ATE/ART, RUE MORGUE, TUNNIT, MYRKKY KÄÄRME and others. The JUICE NORMAALI swinger "Mä En Haluu Olla Skinhead" takes the cake on a comp packed with killer old school punk and a smattering of retro-sounding dark / goth sounds (and a coupla new wave smashers). Released as a sampler by new Finnish label Teen Wolf. If this is any indication of quality listeners are in for some good records. (WN) (11-song cassette, lyrics not included, teenwolfrecords.com, Flemingkatu 11, 00500 Helsinki FINLAND)

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# ZINES

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(MM) Marissa Magic
(MR) Mikey Minicomix

**THE CLUMP #4**
**$7.00 / 20 pgs**
This is a humor-based fake newspaper with a lot of fake ads and articles surrounding this guy's comics. The style of the comics are simple but competent. A lot of the focus of this whole comic newspaper thing is on the humor itself. There are so many joke ads and articles in it that it's kinda incredible how much time it must have taken to think everything up and write and photoshop it all together. As far as some of the subject matter, it's kinda whatever to me. Like, he takes whole portions of the book to go off about how much he hates squirrels. That's what you're going to take a stand on? I think the idea behind the work is just to be ludicrous—there isn't much political commentary imbedded in the newspaper, and it's all just meant to be goofy. That's fine, but I just sometimes like things to have a deeper point. At least the delivery for the humor is decent. He does have a larger comic in there where he complains about having to go to Walmart and gets stuck behind some crazy lady (as he describes her) in line. And he's all like, "She's got to be on drugs, right?" It's weird because she's buying exactly fifteen cucumbers. But kinda whatever to that too: Is that really the most interesting thing that happened to him that month? It seemed suburban to me. There's a section in the newspaper where they rate oven mitts, although that's probably fake too. This comic newspaper is amusing, but the $7 price is slightly prohibitive. (MR)
columbusclump@gmail.com / issuu.com/columbusclump / mulletturtle.com

**FLAUSTIN PARADISE #3**
**$3 / 22 pgs**
This is a cool zine with an interesting MO for this issue: punks from five different areas, who don't necessarily all play in the same hardcore bands or have other projects together, are interviewed about their local scenes. Except for NYC, the four others are smaller towns, and there is unanimous enthusiasm for what comes out of places that aren't big cities. The rest of the zine consists of live photos taken in different cities, "shot on disposables," that are better than average in quality and subject expression, even if the band logos are a little blurry. For being a relative upstart, this zine has its own cool aesthetic as far as text, art, and writing go so far. (DG)
flaustinparadise@gmail.com

**FLAUSTIN PARADISE #4**
**$3 / 30 pgs**
This issue is mostly a photozine, with the quality being about the same as #3 (reviewed above). The exception is a 2013 interview with tape label False Form, which is a fun, nerdy interview that goes into the inner-workings of the label. Good shit. Get both issues. (DG)
flaustinparadise@gmail.com

**LOS ANGELES QUEER RESISTANCE #6**
**$2.00 / 46 pgs**
This is a compilation of pieces from the Los Angeles Queer Resistance Collective. It ranges from essays to narratives to drawings, making an aesthetic that's varied but occasionally jarring. There is an essay on immigration that moves with the writer through various terminologies for immigrant and this thread of semantics and the power and weirdness of words can be followed throughout all of the different pieces in the zine. Topics in the zine range from vengeance to addiction to laundry to magick. (MM)
laqrzine@gmail.com

**OUR FUTURE**
**£1.50 / 22 pgs**
Inaugural issue of this zine whose name and logo are likely a nod to No Future, and which seems to already have big ambitions thus far. This issue is dedicated to exploring the mostly unactualized teaming up of British electronic group the KLF and Extreme Noise Terror. I highly recommend picking this up for the full story, but the project was to involve ENT and KLF collaborating on several tracks for KLF's ultimately never-released *The Black Room* LP, which was abandoned in the middle of recording, and yielded only a mailorder-only 12" single of a reworked song called "3AM Eternal," along with an infamous performance at the 1992 Brit Awards. The writing is culled from both the author's personal research and a recent interview with Mark Bailey of ENT. The author also talks a bit about then-contemporary and future cross-pollinating of electronic music with punk / metal stuff, ranging from an abysmal dance mix of "Ace of Spades" to the success of the Prodigy later in the decade. Aside from being personally fascinated by this kind of genre colliding, the writing and research in this first issue is stellar, and I'm very excited to see what's in store for *Our Future*. (DG)
ourfuturerecords.blogspot.com

**PLASTIC BOMB**
**€3,70 / 80 pgs**
This is a hefty issue of *Plastic Bomb*, featuring a band on the cover called Totenwald that looks like human anime, all spikes and studs and fancy makeup including a baby doll dressed punk. (I'll admit, it pulls me in.) The font size is almost as small as *Slug & Lettuce* (RIP) and the content is all over the place, including such diverse interviews as with Razzia, Leo & the Lineup, and Kreator among many more. The part I

really wish I could read is the column about two hard ass feminists both drinking from "male tears" mugs. Alongside is a picture of a femme yoga-spreading on the subway, taking up like an entire bench with two sad looking menschs on either side. I appreciate that this magazine covers so many different genres of punk and has a thorough amount of content spread between opinions, retrospectives, reviews and interviews. It also comes with a CD with different bands than the ones featured. (JB)
plastic-bomb.de

**POST DEPRESSION BLUES**
**$2.00 / 18 pgs**
I never quite know what to say about personal writings on depression. Writing and putting out something is a great catharsis. It has potential to lead you to people with similar experiences. It can make some people feel not alone. So reviewing these things always seems rude, but here we are. This zine is melodramatic and the constant dropping of buzzwords, never referring to food without slapping "vegan" either before or after, and casual mentions of things like apps or Tumblr are off-putting. This is a diary of a heartbroken teen that envisions an audience listening in. Most likely everyone has lived through moments similar to those that are written about here, and if you're in the throes of the aftermath of your first big whoop romantic relationship, this may be comforting. (MM)
darcycrashdistro.tumblr.com

**RUM LAD #10**
**£2.00 / 16 pgs**
An illustrated journal of the author's experiences touring with his band. Steve plays in Moloch, a doom metal band from the UK. This is the tenth installment of his comic, and while I haven't seen any of the others I think this issue gives a good general idea of what his work is like. I showed this book around, and me and other people's biggest critique is the classic "switcheroo." That's when you look at the cover art on a comic and it's super good, and then flip inside the book and see a bunch of super-simple drawings that look nothing like it. That was definitely the case here. You do want your cover art to look good, because that's the first thing that people see, but then if you set the bar too high, it becomes a disappointment when you open the book up and flip through it. Thing of it is, the second style in the book is just not very accessible. Everyone is drawn as a super-simple cartoon, and there is a lot of cramped writing that makes it hard to follow the narrative. As for the content itself, I guess it could be sour grapes, but I don't find the diary that exciting. It's not like this guy should be going around doing outrageous crazy stuff on purpose to have something interesting to write about, but some of it is pretty basic: Went here, this is the food they served. Went to this show, or played with this band, then crashed at so-and-so's house. Went here, ate this food, here's a recipe and picture of the food. This show was good. Etc. etc. Even boring stuff can be interesting, depending on who tells the story. I'm glad that there's some part of the world where people can still live that punk-rock-jet-setting lifestyle and all. In any case, out of the last huge pile of comix I had to review, I would put this one close to the top for technical skill and content. (MR)
rumladzine@gmail.com / stevelarder.co.uk

**SHORT STORIES #2**
**$3 / 12 pgs**
In which mini stories about being a punk are told in unrelated and brief fashion on the subject of romance, work, travel, doin' crimes and drinking. There are some occasional bright truths, such as rubbing diffusion sticks in their armpits, or describing popping their lover's zits, but I only kept reading this because I had to. I can find beauty in anything so I was able to glean insight, but I was sort of annoyed at the jerky lack of a narrative. Consider adding art to your next issue! (JB)
mmmmatranga@gmail.com

**TOLEDO PONKEROS #5**
**$2 / 36 pgs**
If you're anything like me (and I assume you are all exactly the same as me), you find zines about lesser talked about punk zines fascinating. NYC? San Francisco? London? Heard about all that stuff already, but what's happening in Toledo, Ohio? Well, this zine gives us a glimpse into one part of that punk scene. In the "Locals Only" section Johnny Jacks does interviews with the band Tear Off/Clean Up and a pair of young punks named Brandon and Cheyenne. Then, Marky Moon gives us some Toledo punk scene news. In the "Outta Towners" section there's an interview with Puerto Rican band Ignorados Comediantes. The zine has some kind of grainy B&W photos but then there's some great pen and ink art thrown in too. Overall Johnny Jacks gives us a zine focusing on people excited about their community and wanting folks to get involved in it, even though Toledo sounds like a sort of bleak place in many ways. The Tear Off/Clean Up interview brought out the term "urban transcendentalism," which seems to capture the attitude behind this zine and Toledo. If you're interested in Toledo, smaller city punk scenes, or the Midwest check this out. (KS)
lcodrnr@hotmail.com

**THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #147**
**40 pgs**
*TTWN* seems to have existed for a million years. The last few issues I've come across have been increasingly political, but everything throughout is still always written in Boone's letter-from-an-old-friend style. Always a ton of live reviews, some record reviews, at least two interviews, a pixelated photo, and then updates, whether personal or political. Things change but *TTWN* will probably always be. (MM)
ttwn@hotmail.com

**TRUST #182**
**€3 / 68 pgs**
*Trust* is a long running German zine covering punk, hardcore, and all that related stuff. #182 has columns, record and zine reviews, and interviews with Cold Kids, Ten Volt Shock, Gunner Records folks, the Tian An Men 89 records people, and *MRR*'s own contributing columnist Al Quint. Full disclosure, I can't read German, but looking at this zine I wish I did. The layout and font choices are great, the photos crisp and eye catching, and the whole thing runs the good side of slick aesthetic punk magazines. If you read German and are into punk, check this out for sure—it comes across as a German sibling to *MRR*. (KS)
Trust-zine.de / Trust Postfach 11 07 62, 28087 Bremen, GERMANY

# SCENIC

NEW YORK CITY

**GIUDA**
BORN LOOSE / BABY SHAKES / ANIMAL SHOW
JUNE 9 @ BROOKLYN BAZAAR

**CHRON GEN**
JUNE 17 @ SUNNYVALE

**WE THE HEATHENS / ESCAPE FROM THE ZOO**
ATTITUDE ADJUSTERS / OUT OF SYSTEM TRANSFER
JUNE 28 @ CAPE HOUSE

**CITIZENS ARREST**
ALL TORN UP / (A) TRUTH
JUNE 29 @ BROOKLYN BAZAAR

**WRECKLESS ERIC**
JOE JACK TALCUM (THE DEAD MILKMEN)
JUNE 30 @ THE SAFARI ROOM AT EL CORTEZ

**COCKNEY REJECTS**
SHEER TERROR / THE BRASS
JULY 14 @ BROOKLYN BAZAAR

**NIGHT BIRDS**
THE LOVE SONGS
JULY 14 @ CAPE HOUSE

**TSUNAMI BOMB**
TRASHY
JULY 15 @ CAPE HOUSE

**NEUROSIS / CONVERGE**
AMEN RA
AUGUST 4 SOLD OUT & 5 @ WARSAW BK

**BOOZE & GLORY**
ANTAGONIZERS ATL
SEPTEMBER 2 @ BROOKLYN BAZAAR

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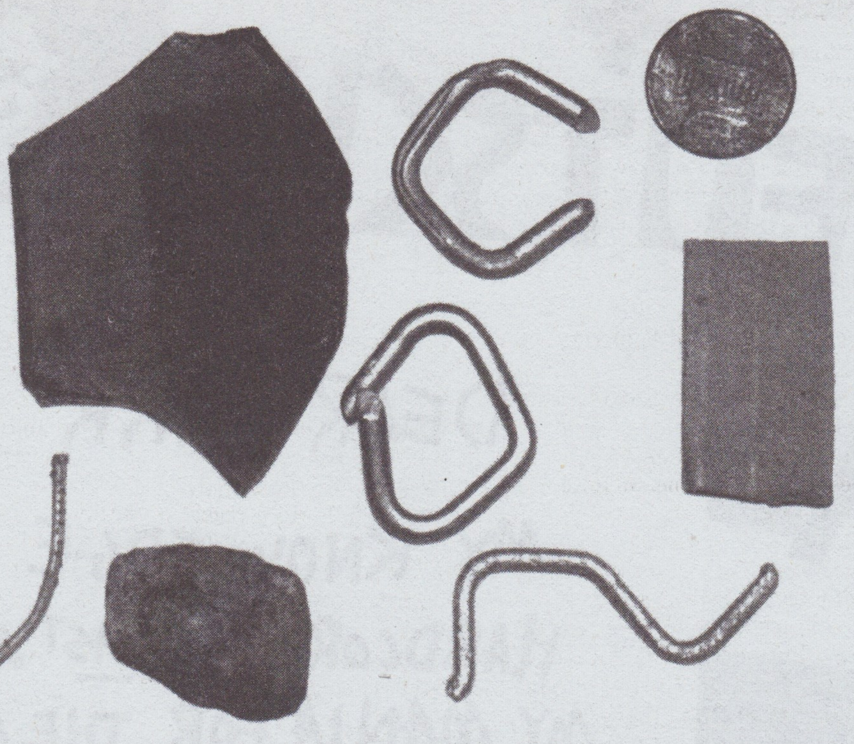
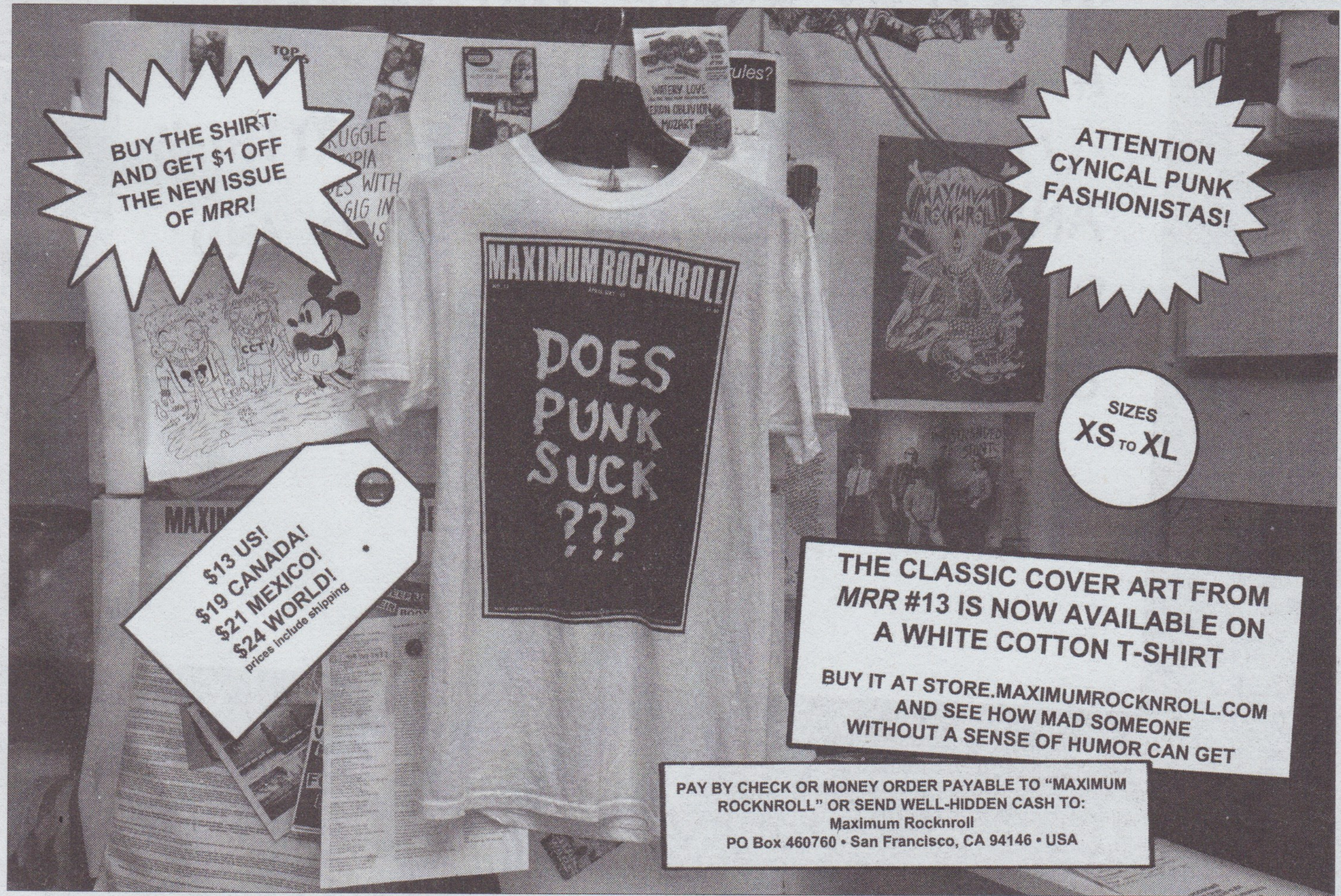
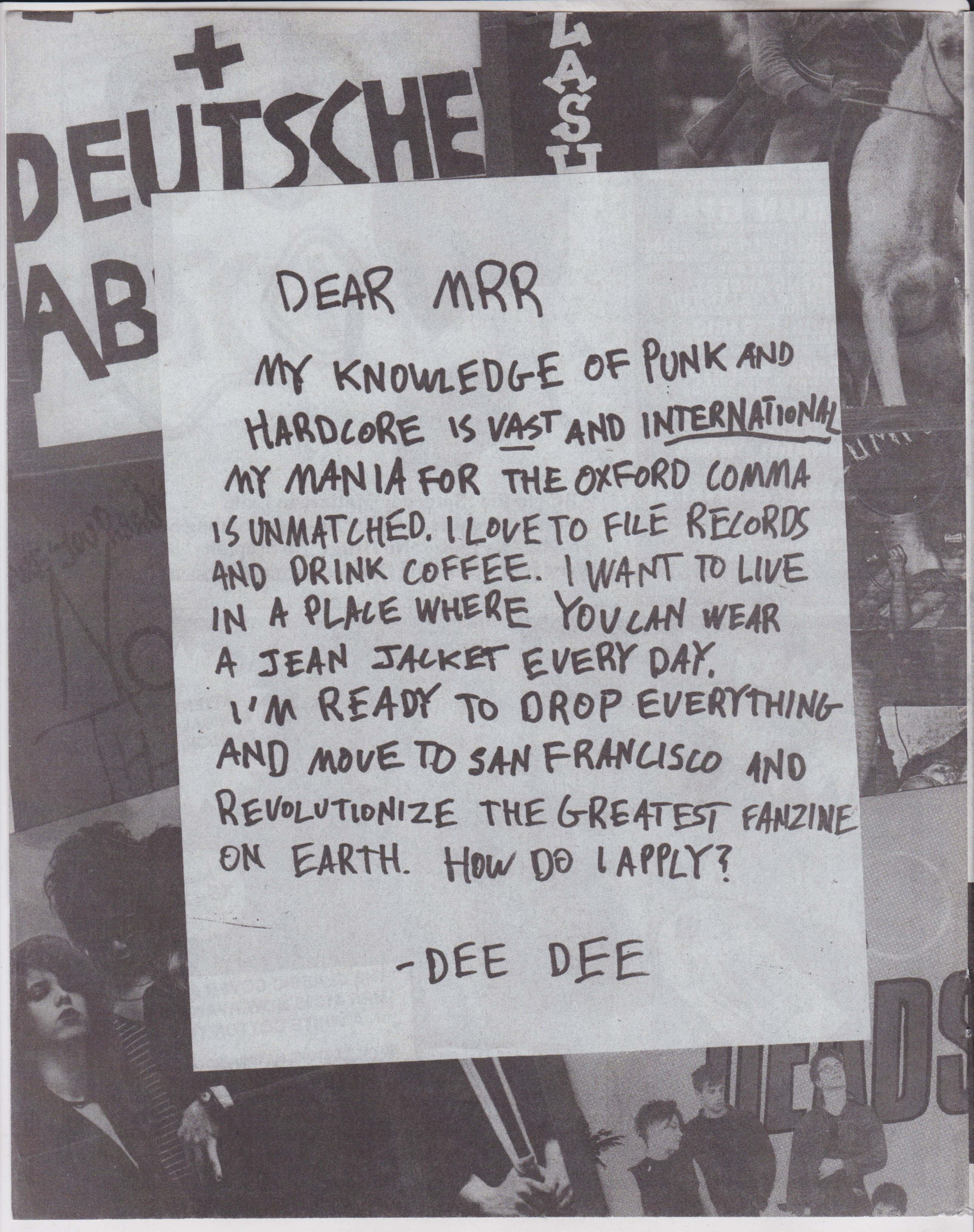


**ABC No Rio Saturday Matinee in Exile**
**At various venues in NYC All-Ages Sliding Scale**
**$7–$12 No Booze No Drugs No Stupidity**
**Show Info. + Booking Queries www.abcnorio.org/punk**






DEAR MRR

MY KNOWLEDGE OF PUNK AND HARDCORE IS VAST AND INTERNATIONAL MY MANIA FOR THE OXFORD COMMA IS UNMATCHED. I LOVE TO FILE RECORDS AND DRINK COFFEE. I WANT TO LIVE IN A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN WEAR A JEAN JACKET EVERY DAY. I'M READY TO DROP EVERYTHING AND MOVE TO SAN FRANCISCO AND REVOLUTIONIZE THE GREATEST FANZINE ON EARTH. HOW DO I APPLY?

-DEE DEE